

The Brooklyn Paper

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BROOKLYN HEIGHTS—DOWNTOWN—NORTH BROOKLYN

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Eric Bennett and his daughter Sophie enjoy a drink at Water Street bar in DUMBO, the first Brooklyn restaurant to provide baby-sitting on demand.

'Sitting' at the bar

DUMBO joint will watch your kids while you dine

By Dana Rubinstein
The Brooklyn Paper

The war between childless bar-goers and the so-called stroller Mafia has ended at one restaurant: the eatery is offering on-site baby-sitters to watch children in a separate room while their parents — and everyone else — dine and drink in peace.

Jeffrey Rodman, the owner of DUMBO's Water Street Restaurant and Lounge, has contracted with a Manhattan company called Parent Play to provide baby-sitting during dinner time at the restaurant, which is between Main and Dock streets in the increasingly kid-populated neighborhood.

"Anything's better than having screaming children in a restaurant," said Rodman.

Kids and bars. It's an issue that has gained traction as more and more establishments have banned the stroller set (hello, Union Hall?) despite the risk of losing parents as customers.

Rodman's solution was to bring in Parent Play.

Brian Kaplan, who founded Parent Play with his wife a year and a half ago, said the service was easy to use: Parents call the company to

make both a dinner and baby-sitter reservation. At the restaurant, the baby-sitter, equipped with toys and play mats, gives the parents a "security card" — to prevent the child going home with the wrong adult — and then the babes go play while the parents eat.

There's even a "curriculum" to help guide play-time — from music lessons to Spanish lessons to building blocks. Why shouldn't your kid learn his "uno, dos, tres" while you're having your first, second and third drinks?

Bob Maresca and his wife were one of four couples that used the service on Valentine's Day.

"It gave us more of an adult experience," said Maresca, who has a 10-month-old son. "He was on the play mat with the sitter, and they were playing with a little wooden train set. It was cute."

"My wife and I enjoy having a date once in a while," continued Maresca.

The cost of the service, even with Water Street footing some of the bill, is \$18 for one child, \$25 for two, and \$30 for three.

The service is available at three Manhattan restaurants. Kaplan said: Water Street is thus far the only Brooklyn venue.

By Dana Rubinstein
The Brooklyn Paper

The Park Slope Food Co-op is poised to ban the sale of bottled water, reaffirming the supermarket's status as a hotbed of self-conscious environmentalism.

The ban, if approved by a vote of the Co-op's 12,000 members, would apply to all plastic and glass bottles of water (though distilled and carbonated water would be exempt).

Co-op General Manager Joe Holtz predicted the proposal would pass this spring, thanks to the members-only supermarket's famously environmental ethos.

"Even my 11-year-old daughter is aware of the transportation cost and energy waste that comes with plastic bottles," said Park Sloper and Co-op member Katia Righetti. "I think everyone should start becoming aware of the problem."

The problem is this: 30 million or so bottles end up in landfills every day, environmental experts say. The vast majority of the bottles are made from petroleum — roughly 1.5 million barrels of oil a year, enough to fuel 100,000 cars, according to the Earth Policy Institute.

Moreover, New York City tap water is generally better than bottled water, since city standards are more stringent than the Food and Drug Administration's.

Such numbers are what motivated Food Co-op member Barbara Kancelbaum to put the issue on the local agenda.

In August, 2006 — during the height of the bottled water season — Kancelbaum



The Park Slope Food Co-op is moving to ban bottled water.

PLASTIC BAG BONUS
DUMBO grocer saves you a dime
PAGE 5

sparked a discussion on the Park Slope Parents message board when she encouraged neighbors to kick their Aquafina addiction and get their Fiji fill at the tap.

She also suggested — in further Park Slope style — that locals "put aside \$1 every time we don't buy bottled water [for the month of August] and make a big donation to a local or national organization."

This week, Kancelbaum told The Brooklyn Paper that she strongly supported the Co-op's proposed ban.

"Bottled water is a completely unnecessary product for most people, and only serves to harm the environment," she said.

The Co-op, on Union Street between Sixth and Seventh avenues, has long been miles ahead of the environmentalist curve. It began charging for plastic bags a good 20 years ago — an issue that only now are other stores confronting. And the Co-op has long prided itself on its organic and fair-trade products.

That said, at least one Co-op member described himself as "not terribly excited about banning bottled water."

"We do have to attend to the effects the plastic has on the environment," said Hugh English, a Park Slope resident. "However, what we are faced with constantly are these individual solutions, like banning plastic bottles, that don't quite do enough."

And, this being the Co-op, some ban supporters found a way to turn an environmental initiative into a class war.

"What bottled water does is create a class difference between those who can afford it and those who can't," said member Gene Glickman.

See **WATER** on page 12



'Miss'-ing Brooklyn

It hasn't been an easy reign for Miss Brooklyn Leigh-Taylor Smith. Despite her obvious qualifications (above), Smith found herself under fire for, of all things, being a Manhattanite. See page 12 for our exclusive interview with the queen of Kings, who takes on her critics.

Cops: Art show is 'brutal' to us

By Ben Muessig
The Brooklyn Paper

A Fort Greene museum is drawing fire from police union brass in Manhattan for what they believe is an anti-cop exhibit, but Brooklynites are defending the museum in a fight over arts funding and free speech.

In an echo of the "Sensation" controversy almost a decade ago, the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association is questioning whether tax dollars should fund an art display that it considers obscene. The two works in question are part of "Welcome to America," the first retrospective of the Brooklyn artist Dread Scott, which opened last Thursday at the Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Arts.

The pieces are nothing if not controversial: "Sign of the Times" is a yellow street sign depicting a cop shooting an unarmed man. "DANGER," the sign warns, "POLICE IN AREA."

Across the room, in a piece called "The Blue Wall of Violence," mechanized police batons pound on a wooden casket. Six shooting range targets hang above the casket, each labeled with a date when police shot an unarmed New

Yorker. The human bull's-eyes grasp household objects that police have mistaken for weapons, such as a squeegie, a candy bar, and, in reference to the 1999 death of Amadou Diallo, a wallet.

Artwork is bound to have its critics.

"We don't like it," said spokesman Al O'Leary. "We don't think it's accurate in terms of what police officers do. It makes it look like police officers are simply out there to shoot innocent people."

O'Leary admitted that the PBA has only seen media coverage of the exhibit rather than the artwork itself. As such, he said the union was mostly questioning whether government subsidies should be going to McCADA, which gets about 30 percent of its funding from taxpayers, according to curators.

"We object to state or city funding [being] provided to something that promotes misunderstanding, hatred, or ill will towards police officers," O'Leary said.

The PBA's opposition to the exhibit created a media frenzy, with Manhattan-based news outlets eager to jump in on the controversy. The Daily News described Scott's art as "cop-bashing," stating that his works "portray the city's Finest as trigger-happy racists who

See **McCADA** on page 5

Now leaving Little Poland

By Ben Muessig
The Brooklyn Paper

On the shelves of Polish grocery stores in Greenpoint, bottles of Mountain Dew and Diet Coke are beginning to crowd out liters of Żywiec and Piasek.

But it's not just groceries that are becoming more American in Brooklyn's Little Poland. The neighborhood is, too.

"Nearly half the Polish people who used to live in Greenpoint have moved away," said Walter Gol, co-owner of Paski Meat Market on Manhattan Avenue. "Here in Greenpoint we have an old generation of Polish immigrants. But the new immigrants are moving to Queens."

Between 2005 and 2006, the number of Polish immigrants living in Brooklyn decreased

by 4,010, while the number of Polish immigrants residing in Queens increased by 4,109, according to Census statistics. The similarities in the numbers is no coincidence.

"It started about five years ago when the rents [in Greenpoint] started to increase," said Steven Tykanski, owner of Steve's Meat Market, a Nassau Avenue staple, which

has operated from the same storefront for the past 35 years. "Landlords started raising the rent and people from outside started buying up houses — some of the Polish people couldn't afford to stay."

In Greenpoint, a one-bedroom apartment that rented for as little as \$700 per month in 2005 now rents for \$1,000-\$1,200 per month.

And it's not just residential rents, Kardaz said. "Commercial rent has increased just as much, if not more."

It's no surprise who's driving those rents up into the neighborhood's increasingly high skyline. Young professionals who once nested on the Lower East Side of Manhattan are now seeking bargains in hipster Greenpoint — but those bargain rents are

See **POLISH** on page 14



American chains have displaced ethnic Polish businesses on Manhattan Avenue in Greenpoint (above and left). But that's a heck of a cutlet below!



Nothing for Nader

This time, donors won't give a dime

Call them the Nader Traitors. Days after perennial candidate/saddle burr Ralph Nader announced that he was running, again, for president, the very people who should have been cheering the loudest — left-wing Brooklynites who voted for him in his last two campaigns — were making a different kind of noise.

The noise of teeth gashing and fists clenching.

Even the only Brooklynite who actually contributed money to Nader's inept 2004 campaign has cut ties to the twice-failed presidential hopeful.

"No way, not this time," said Rahman Bachus, a Crown Heights man who sent Nader \$200 four years ago. "His campaign is fruitless this time."

As opposed to last time?

"At least I thought he'd get his message out," admitted Bachus. "This time, there's no chance."

So Bachus has climbed off the broken down bandwagon of lost causes and is supporting Illinois Sen. Barack Obama for his "youthfulness and energy — and he's more vigorous and liberal than Hillary."

Call Bachus what you will for abandoning Nader (the word "reasonable" comes to mind), but if he's bailed out, it's no wonder that Brooklynites who funded Nader's transcendent (I mean "infuriating")

THE BROOKLYN ANGLE by Gersh Kuntzman

2000 run are also disenchanted.

"I'm kinda into my own life right now, so I won't be getting involved this time," said Sara Cross of Brooklyn Heights. "Actually, I'm not even sure why you're calling me about Ralph Nader."

I had to remind Cross that she had donated \$400 to Nader's cam-

paign. (Imagine that! She'd actually blocked it out of her mind after the 2000 debacle.)

None of the other former Nader supporters returned my calls — further evidence that these one-time benefactors are content to leave Nader in the dustbin of history.

Given that apathy — and given how much most Democrats (and when I say "most Democrats," I mean me) Martin had for subjecting us to eight years of inept president — I wondered why anyone would jump on Team Nader now. So I went to "Draft Nader" and scoured the petition for signers from Brooklyn. There were a few, of course, though, curiously, most of their phone numbers were either disconnected or didn't exist. And one signer was named Travis Bickle, so it's hard to tell how many real live human beings support Nader.

But there's good news for "all" you Nader lovers out there: yes, I'm talking to you on 10th Street with the "Kucinich for President" sign still in your window; Three people have posted online they'd be interested in joining a Nader "Meetup" group in Brooklyn.

Alas, no one has set up the group yet.

DAILY NEWS

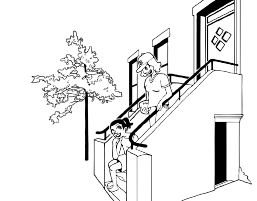
BKLYN TO NADER: DROP DEAD

Boro Says It Won't Get Fooled Again

Last Donor Won't Give

Mets Lose Another

How the Daily News may play the Gersh Kuntzman-uncovered fact that Brooklynites will not be falling into the Ralph Nader trap this time.



THE SLOPE

NEIGHBORHOOD REPORT

FORT GREENE

My copycat neighbors

Maybe we should start calling Fort Greene, Park Greene. Or Fort Slope. Or Fort Slenec. The neighborhood long known as the artist's alternative to Park Slope has, of late, been taking tips from its stodgier, uptown neighbor. From supermarkets to restaurants to prostitution, Fort Greene is becoming a copycat neighborhood.

In the past year alone, Fort Greene residents have witnessed Myrtle Avenue, from Flatbush eastward, sprout boutiques and restaurants that could have easily taken root on Fifth Avenue. The march of 12-story buildings along Park Slope's Fourth Avenue border is being followed by high rises along Myrtle Avenue and Fulton Street. And of course, no discussion of Park Slope and its imitators would be complete without mention of coffeeshops, supermarkets, and babies.

"Certainly when you walk around the neighborhood these days, between the baby strollers the Wall Streeters, the Suburbs and the hybrids on the streets, it has a little more of a Park Slope vibe," said Andrew Simon, a magazine editor who's lived in the neighborhood since 2003.

He's not the only one to notice the change. For yuppie's sake, Union Market is coming to the neighborhood! Marko Lalic, one of the three partners behind the upscale grocery store, told The Brooklyn Paper that a number of his customers had moved from Park Slope to Fort Greene, and had asked him to follow suit.

Two Fort Greeners have even decided to open a food co-op, a Park Slope Food Co-op, and are fast gaining interest via their blog, www.fortgreencoop.org. And then there are the coffee shops, which have been sprouting up like so many Arabica plants in the Panama sun. Just a few years back, Tillie's, on DeKalb and Vanderbilt, was the freelancer's only reliable spot to grab a cup of joe and free Wi-Fi. Now, much as Sleepers can bounce from Naudie's to the Tea Lounge, Fort Greene's can coffee-shop-hop from Bittersweet, to Smooth, Urban Spring to Bidonville.

In fact, even Greg Wolf, the owner of Park Slope's legendary Tea Lounge, has considered opening an outlet in Fort Greene.

"We've been asked by a bunch of customers who've moved there," said Wolf. "And we do have plans to expand there."

Even our parks are taking tips from Park Slope. Now, locals can adopt benches in the park via the Fort Greene Park Conservancy, an idea modeled on the long-time Prospect Park Alliance program.

The result is that Fort Greene has acquired a distinctly less edgy vibe. Stores cater to the arrived, rather than the up-and-coming, the mainstream, rather than the avant-garde.

"When I moved to Fort Greene a decade ago, I was moving here for, frankly, a very distinct black bohemian vibe," said Myka Carroll del Barrio, whose peregrinations from Washington Park to Washington Avenue to Downing Street in Clinton Hill have followed the gentrification of the neighborhood.

"In the '90s, Fort Greene was kind of known among a certain community of people as the place Erykah Badu lived," added del Barrio. "In the past decade, it has definitely become a lot more mainstream."

But it's not all doom and gloom for Fort Greene. For one, there are far worse things than looking like Park Slope (it's not like Fort Greene has begun resembling Albany, or even the Upper East Side, for that matter).

As much as Fort Greene changes, it can only change so much. "There's sort of a built-in diversity in this area," said del Barrio. "You have St. Joseph's University and Pratt, and you have the community that hasn't seen or heard any plans for a Starbucks or Duane Reade."

Not yet, anyway.

Dana Rubinstein is a staff reporter for The Brooklyn Paper.

THE KITCHEN SINK

Downtown: Our pals at Forest City Ratner have created a mentoring program with the Big Brothers Big Sisters of New York City. Kids in need of real-life experience will partner with Ratner professionals to mentor them in a business-world environment, according to a statement from Forest City. "Education is the greatest tool that our children have to help pave the way to a brighter future," company CEO Bruce Ratner said. Funny, he said the same thing about Atlantic Yards. ... **Williamsburg:** Hasidic legend Isaac Abraham — every journalist's best friend in the Satmar community — has thrown his talis in the ring to succeed Councilman David Yassky in the district that sprawls from Greenpoint to Park Slope, the Daily News reported. Abraham is now the most-quoted person in the race, but politicians didn't give him much chance against former Yassky aide Evan Thies, District Leader Jo Anne Simon and Steve Levin, who just happens to be chief of staff to the Democratic party boss, Vito Lopez. ... **DUMBO:** Run into our pal, Jennifer Miller, at Rebar the other night. She said things had gotten a bit hairy for her lately — but that's OK because Miller is actually the **Bearded Lady** at the **Goney Island Sideshow**!

E-mail us at Stoop@BrooklynPaper.com

DUMBO

DUMBO plan could nix David

By Dana Rubinstein
The Brooklyn Paper

DUMBO residents and their City Councilman are urging the city to expand a proposed neighborhood rezoning in hopes of blocking an 18-story condo building that neighborhood real-estate titan David Walentas wants to construct next to the Brooklyn Bridge.

The city proposal encompasses only the 12 blocks bounded by Bridge Street, the Manhattan Bridge, the East River and Fort Street — stopping short of the Dock Street site where Walentas wants to build.

As a result, the DUMBO Neighborhood Association unveiled its rezoning proposal last week, which would not only block Walentas, but also



A neighborhood proposal would block David Walentas's Dock Street condo (arrow).

preventing future skyscrapers like the 33-story J Condos and 23-story Beacon Tower.

"The J and the Beacon are out-of-character buildings," said Paul Graziano, who drafted the Association proposal.

Graziano's plan would cover 25 square blocks and permit only [seven-story] construction next to the bridge, said Graziano. "It

would allow development, but not over-development."

As a result, Councilman David Yassky, a fierce opponent of developer Walentas's Dock Street plan, said he'd push for the local proposal.

"I feel strongly that we should not block views of the Brooklyn Bridge," said Yassky (D-Brooklyn Heights).

The city said the debate has only just begun.

"We are at the beginning and expect to engage in a dialogue with stakeholders," said Jennifer Torres, a spokeswoman for the Department of City Planning.

The rezoning plans come three months after DUMBO became a historic district, a designation that does not affect building heights.

WILLIAMSBURG

Grand idea, too late

By Mike McLaughlin
The Brooklyn Paper

The city moved to restrict development along a low-rise stretch of Grand Street, but activists urged the city to speed up the process to protect the neighborhood's character.

The Department of City Planning approved a downzoning of 13 blocks around Grand Street, which would limit the size and appearance of new residential and retail construction.

The rezoning will "protect a critical component of this low-scale neighborhood with its beautifully crafted main street," said Planning Commissioner Amanda Burden in a statement.

The downzoning was necessary, activists said, because the larger, 2005 rezoning of the Williamsburg-Greenpoint waterfront left out the commercial corridor of brick buildings bookended by Berry Street and Marcy Avenue and stretching a few blocks north and south of Grand Street — and, as a result, could have invited large-scale development.

"The area ... is being built up in a way that is wildly out of context with the rest of the area," said Evan Thies, chairman of the Community Board 1 environmental committee.

The downzoning directly affects two modern, Karl Fischer-designed buildings that are proposed for different corners of Grand and Driggs streets — one 13 stories, the other 15.

The taller building may be substantially redesigned as a result of the city effort, the architect told The Brooklyn Paper this week.

The City Council must approve or reject the downzoning plan within 50 days. The City Council's zoning and land-use committee will hold a hearing on March 19 at City Hall (Center Street at the Brooklyn Bridge entrance in Manhattan). Call (212) 788-7100 for time of hearing and other info.



Residents are concerned about high-rise development on Grand Street.

FT. GREENE

New G spot?

By Mike McLaughlin
The Brooklyn Paper

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority has promised to study whether it is feasible to connect the G train with the maze of lines at the Atlantic Avenue-Pacific Street subway station at the crossroads of Park Slope, Fort Greene, Boerum Hill and Downtown Brooklyn.

The agency promised Councilmember Letitia James (D-Fort Greene) last week that it would study what it would take — and, more important, how much it would cost — to build a tunnel that would connect the G line's Fulton Street stop with the Atlantic-Pacific station, a move that would simplify commuting for tens of thousands of people.

"It would make life better for people in Fort Greene and Clinton Hill," James said. "The so-called 'Crosstown Local' passes tantalizingly close to Atlantic Avenue, a portal for many subways and the Long Island Railroad, but skirts the hub as it travels between the Lafayette Avenue and Hoyt-Schermerhorn stations, limiting the number of ways in which Manhattan-bound G riders can transfer and continue their commutes."

Clinton Hill residents salivated over the possibility of having a free transfer to the 4/5, B/Q, NR, M at Atlantic-Pacific.

"That's a great idea," said Amy Sly. "The lines are so close to each other." But burrowing a tunnel between Fulton Street and Atlantic Avenue is no simple task.

Initial estimates from the MTA say it would take 5-10 years to complete and would be the biggest shaft in the subway system, according to James.

New York City Transit would not comment, but one thing is clear: the agency is trying to improve the much-maligned G line.

New York City Transit thrilled riders in December when it announced it would increase the number of trains per hour — if (and it's a big if) finances look good in the spring.

It also plans to permanently extend service to Church Avenue in Kensington, creating the first direct link between Park Slope and Williamsburg.

But as the MTA pivots, it also takes away. The expanded service in Brooklyn comes at the expense of Queens. Currently, travelers can reach Forest Hills on nights and weekends, but if the changes go through, the G would permanently terminate in Long Island City.

Straphangers criticized the MTA, saying that it's ignoring the line's ridership.

There's a very healthy commuting community between Brooklyn and Queens," said Teresa Toro, the chair of Community Board 1's transportation committee. James, a member of the Save the G Coalition.

BROOKLYN HEIGHTS

Another Remsen swastika

By Emily Lavin
The Brooklyn Paper

Vandals tagged a Remsen Street brownstone with anti-Semitic graffiti last week, less than one month after a Brooklyn Heights man was indicted for covering houses and cars on the same street with swastikas last fall.

Martha Spector called police to her 22 Remsen St. brownstone on Feb. 29 after a neighbor noticed the swastika on the building.

"It's upsetting," said Leonard Spector, who thinks his home was targeted randomly. Police are treating the current incident as a hate crime — just as they did last September, when 19 swastikas and dozens of flyers bearing anti-Semitic messages turned up on the street, including swastikas at Congregation B'nai Avraham and the Brooklyn Heights Synagogue.

In January, police arrested Ivo Ivo Ivanov, 37, in his bomb-filled Remsen



Cops found this hate crime on the side of 22 Remsen St.

Street apartment. He's awaiting trial.

Cops did not release information linking last week's incident to those in the fall. As such, neighbors had little news to go on.

"I was astonished, because I thought the guy had been arrested," said Louanna Carlin. Rabbi Aaron Raskin of Congregation B'nai Avraham said residents must remain united. "The swastika reminds us that there is an evil in our world, and to combat that evil we have to light a candle."

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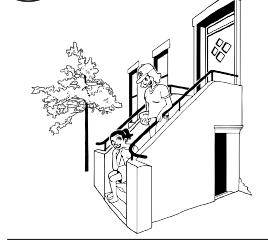
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TIE STREET

NEIGHBORHOOD REPORT

PARK SLOPE



Our columnist was lucky enough to get inside the seldom-seen Park Slope night spot, Club Loco.

Is Club Loco too loco?

I am one of a handful of privileged Park Slope adults. I have seen the inside of Club Loco. For those who do not know, Club Loco is a monthly teen "nightclub," an evening of bands and a place to hang out with friends inside the Old First Church on Seventh Avenue. What's unique is the strict "no-parents, no-teachers" policy. The only grown-ups allowed inside are the hired security guard and the chaperones, who are all in their 20s (which is sort of like an adult, I guess).

So why was I allowed inside this teenage sanctuary? Well, it's because I am also in my 20s (just kidding). Actually, Club Loco is now celebrating its one-year anniversary and the leaders of the organization are looking for new ideas and some fresh leadership, so it seemed like a little publicity would be a good idea.

Walking in, I was thrown right back to my own high school dance days. It was dark and there was the band playing inside. There was that atmosphere of excitement and potential for the evening ahead. I felt painfully out of place (just like I did back then, truth be told).

But once inside, it did feel different from my high school dances. Everyone inside the place was practically a newborn — or so it seemed to me. Even if I could throw myself back into the old teenage mindset, my high school dances were heavy with an adult presence — mostly teachers getting overtime for this thankless task.

I stuck out like an SUV at an NRDC meeting. I couldn't wait to leave.

"That's how you are supposed to feel," I was told by Henry C., a 16-year-old Park Slope musician who helped found Club Loco, and who happened to be performing that night. The fact that the venue is restricted to teens seems to be a successful part of Club Loco's presence in the neighborhood.

Otherwise, though, the Club Loco experience seems to be a mixed bag for local teens. And, not surprisingly, the reasons some teens have conflicted feelings about it are probably the very same things that many parents like about Club Loco.

"I've always had a really good time there," said Grace G., a 15-year-old. "Everyone goes there to see friends, but sometimes they go overboard with searching people." She met a big group of people there she now counts among her friends.

"I've gotten yelled at for holding hands with my girlfriend," Jack S., 17, told me, and he says that dancing tends to be discouraged in case it gets out of control.

But teens who are musicians, like Jack S., also appreciate the fact that Club Loco is another place where they can perform and go to listen to music.

"It's really good for a band that is just starting out," he says. On the other hand, he is strongly opposed to censorship and he feels that it is the job of a "moral" band to include talk about blood and the devil in their lyrics.

"It's still primarily a church," and they're very clear about that," he says.

It probably comes as no surprise that the adult in charge doesn't see it that way.

"It is housed in the church, but otherwise it has nothing to do with the church," says Lois Wingerston, Club Loco's current leader. It was her daughter who had the idea for the club. Now in college, Wingerston's daughter spent her teen years in the Slope trying to convince her mother that going to one of the teen hangouts in the city was perfectly safe.

Wingerston's research revealed otherwise. These teen "clubs" were typically poorly monitored and the entrance poorly screened. One day, inside the large space behind the sanctuary at Old First, her daughter said, "You know, with the right lighting and some comfortable places to sit, this could make a fabulous space for a club."

The Park Slope Civic Council awarded Club Loco a seed grant. The funds allowed for the purchase of some furniture, including some giant throw pillows to sit on, and lighting and decorations to transform the space.

So what is in the future for Club Loco? The fact is that most teens really prefer to hang out at their friend's homes, or just to "wander the streets for hours," as more than one teen told me. But most seemed to feel that it is good to have a place to go and listen to music with their peers, and it is valued by most of them for that reason.

It's the age-old dilemma. No matter how innovative and no matter how hard adults try, teenagers are people who crave freedom and respect from adults. And adults are people who typically choose worry over trust.

Wendy Ponte is a freelance writer who lives in Park Slope.

THE KITCHEN SINK

Windsor Terrace: Bishop Ford HS football hero **Gokhan "Call me Gie" Ozkan** got a scholarship at the University of Buffalo — the first Ford star to go on to a Division I school. Go get 'em, Gokhan! • **Bay Ridge:** Our friends at **Harbor Fitness** — a location in Bay Ridge and Park Slope — are raising money to fight autism. Stop by either location before March 13 and the cost of your fitness class will be donated to **HeartShare**. For information, call (718) 238-9400 in Bay Ridge or (718) 965-6200 in the Slope. • **Eight more years!** For the eighth straight year, **Steve Sen, Marly Golden** will offer free tax preparation for seniors at his Bay Ridge office. To make an appointment, call (718) 238-6044. When E.F. Hutton talks, people listen, but when Golden opens his office, people flock — so make an appointment today. • **Park Slope:** **Puri Diner** fans, don't worry — your favorite egg-and-bacon joint is only closed for renovations. A sign promises a March 11 reopening. • **PS 107**, was such a hot school that Community Board 6's **Isabel Crozier Hammerman** stopped by Hammerman, of course, is a big booster of volunteerism (and he's also running for Council).

Email: Stop@BrooklynPaper.com

BAY RIDGE

Nice place to visit or die

Two deaths in three months at Gregory Hotel spur talk

By Mike McLaughlin

The Brooklyn Paper

Three months, two deaths, one hotel — and everyone is talking.

Bay Ridge is practically buzzing over the two bizarre deaths at the West Western Hotel Gregory this winter — the first, back in December, when a 20-year-old woman allegedly fatally stabbed a man in what she said was self-defense, and the second coming last week, when a 52-year-old man committed suicide in a bathroom at the Fourth Avenue hotel.

One resident saw the deaths as a possible bellwether for the neighborhood.

"Things change, but not always for the best," said Blanche, an elderly resident of nearby 82nd Street who didn't want to share her last name.

The location of the two grisly acts was almost as unbelievable as the crimes themselves.

"We're shocked, because it's a very nice place," Blanche added. "It was not easy for others to pass the crime scene-cum-lodge."

It was a little nerve-wracking for my family to see the cops cars again," said Paul Guyette. Even the boys in blue were surprised to be investigating an

officer death at the neighborhood's most respectable hotel. The 61-year-old Gregory Hotel is where many people's relatives stay when visiting their grandkids, and where baseball teams sometimes stay when they're playing the Cyclones.

There is another hotel nearby, at 93rd Street, but it has a reputation as a "hot sheets" joint, given its hourly rates. That's what made the dual crimes at the Gregory so surprising, cops said.

"Everyone remembered the stabbing and then, the suicide," said Sgt. John Stoyke, a community affairs officer with the 68th Precinct. "Everyone was talking about it."



Gregory Hotel guest George Brown (above), in Brooklyn on business, was surprised to hear about two recent deaths. Earlier in the week, 68th Precinct CO Eric Rodriguez (left) discussed the situation.



What they were talking about is this: Cops say that on Dec. 2, Pamela Hansen, 20, of Bedford-Stuyvesant, fatally knifed David Diaz, a janitor at the Goldfingers strip club in Queens, where Hansen was a dancer. The two had checked into the hotel together, near Diaz's home, but only Hansen walked out the next day. She claims she killed Diaz to protect herself when he got rough in bed, but she also admits to having bid the weapon under a pillow before they became intimate.

Now, she's facing second-degree murder charges.

Then, on Feb. 18, a cleaning woman discovered Ridge resident Paul Menno's body on the

hallroom floor. Duct tape covered his mouth, but police determined that it was a suicide. Menno, an accountant, was a widower with two grown children, and possibly a gambling problem to boot, Newsday reported.

Recent guests were unaware that they had checked into the Do Drop Dead Inn.

"You'd never know it from the look of the hotel," said George Brown, who was in Brooklyn on business. "The fact that two things happened in such a short time is never comfortable news. But life goes on."

Hotel employees would not comment for the story, following company policy.

BAY RIDGE



Opponents of the demolition of Green Church last marched on March 1.

Jazzy funeral for church

The Brooklyn Paper

They've tried marching. They've tried chanting. So why not try a little New Orleans jazz to save the historic Bay Ridge United Methodist Church?

The so-called "Committee to Save the Green Church" will turn its regular Saturday afternoon rally at the corner of Fourth and Ovington avenues next week into a "New Orleans-style funeral," said organizer and preservationist Victoria Hofmo.

"Such a funeral has two parts: the celebration and the mourning — both of which are apropos of this situation," Hofmo said, referring to the imminent demolition of the 100-plus-year-old edifice.

"We are celebrating the life of this church and its importance to the Bay Ridge community," Hofmo added. "We are mourning the destruction of the three buildings, including the magnificent church, the removal of 21 people's remains, and the negative impact this demolition will have on the neighbors."

Green Church pastor Robert Emerick has argued that selling the church's land is the only way to save the financially strapped congregation, which spends a substantial portion of its annual budget maintaining the old green limestone building, he said.

This week, Emerick was out of town and could not be reached for comment. "Rally to Save the Green Church (corner of Ovington and Fourth avenues in Bay Ridge), March 15, 1 p.m. Call (718) 748-5950 for info."

Bay Ridge residents are still trying to fix the Grand Army Plaza mess, but there's one thing missing from the effort: your brilliant idea.

"The traffic circle is broken and can be made better," said Robert Witherspoon, a member of the Grand Army Coalition. "It's at the center of [a large part of Brooklyn], but it's an empty center."

To fill that void with human activity (and not more traffic), the Coalition has partnered with the Design Trust for Public Space to run a contest to reinvent the wheel in the middle of Brooklyn.

The sky's the limit for ideas, so don't get bogged down in worrying about what will actually work.

"The idea is not to come up with a specific plan, but to generate visions and excitement about how the plaza can be transformed," said Stephanie Elson, program director at the Design Trust for Public Space, which is putting up the \$5,000 win-

ning prize.

There are no official design parameters for the competition — you could suggest, for example, detouring the Soldiers' and Sailors' arch in the center of the roundabout to make way for a parking lot — but Witherspoon, one of the jurors, is inclined to smile upon submissions that overlap with the Coalition's goals for turning Grand Army Plaza from a dead-end into a neighborhood resource.

Such goals include giving pedestrians more time to get across busy roadways like Eastern Parkway; increasing commercial activity, possibly with a greenmarket several days a week instead of only Saturday; and restoring and closing some streets so that Prospect Park would extend beyond the arch to its neighboring fountain.

Such a plan would require the southern part of the traffic circle to be closed, with traffic rerouted onto new, two-way roads within the circle and onto a two-way Prospect Park West.

Visit www.designtrust.org for information about the contest.

D'TOWN

New G spot?

Tish: Study LIRR link

By Mike McLaughlin

The Brooklyn Paper

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority has promised to study whether it is feasible to connect the G train with the maze of lines at the Atlantic Avenue-Pacific Street subway station at the crossroads of Park Slope, Fort Greene, Brown Hill and Downtown Brooklyn.

The agency promised Councilmember Letitia James (D-Fort Greene) last week that it would study what it would take — and, more important, how much it would cost — to build a tunnel that would connect the G line's Fulton Street stop with the Atlantic-Pacific station, a move that would simplify commuting for tens of thousands of people.

It would make life better for people in Fort Greene and Clinton Hill," James said.

The so-called "Cross-town Local" passes tantalizingly close to Atlantic Avenue, a portal for many subways and the Long Island Railroad, but skirts the hub as it travels between the Lafayette Avenue and Hoyt-Schermerhorn stations, limiting the number of ways in which Manhattan-bound G riders can transfer and continue their commutes.

Clinton Hill residents salivated over the possibility of having a free transfer to the B, Q, NR, M and Atlantic-Pacific.

"That's a great idea," said Amy Sly. "The lines are so close to each other."

But burrowing a tunnel between Fulton Street and Atlantic Avenue is no simple task.

Initial estimates from the MTA say it would take 5-10 years to complete and would be the biggest shaft in the subway system, according to James.

New York City Transit would not comment, but one thing is clear: the agency is trying to improve the much-maligned G line.

New York City Transit thrilled riders in December when it announced it would increase the number of trains per hour — if (and it's a big if) finances look good in the spring.

It also plans to permanently extend service to Church Avenue in Kensington, creating the first direct link between Park Slope and Williamsburg.

But as the MTA gives it, it also takes away.

The expanded service in Brooklyn comes at the expense of Queens. Currently, travelers can reach Forest Hills on nights and weekends, but if the changes go through, G would permanently terminate in Long Island City.

Straphangers criticized the MTA, saying that it's ignoring life's ridership. There's a very healthy commuting community between Brooklyn and Queens," said Teresa Toro, chair of Community Board 1's transportation committee and member of the Save the G Coalition.

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The Brooklyn Paper

78th Precinct

PARK SLOPE

A beer-loving perp assaulted a bodega clerk and then stole fake money off the store's wall before running away on Feb. 26.

The action started at 3 p.m., when the thug entered the bodega, on Fifth Avenue between Carroll Street and Garfield Place, and promptly grabbed a beer bottle from the fridge.

But he wasn't drinking; instead, he ran behind the counter, smashed the worker with the bottle and tried to open the register.

Failing this, he grabbed congratulatory cash off the wall behind the counter.

"It's fake!" said the clerk, but the thug didn't care, grabbing the \$5 and \$100 bills before fleeing on a bike.

Gang banged

An 11th Street man was pummeled and mugged by a gang of four in broad daylight on Feb. 28 — but the fearome foursome was soon collared, cops said.

The 46-year-old victim told cops that he was walking on 10th Street between Seventh and Eighth avenues at around 2:15 when the gang — all boys, ages 15 to 17 — attacked from behind.

After bashing him about the head and nose, the pack stole \$80, various credit and debit cards, an iPod and a cellphone. Police arrested four suspects, but details were not available.

Worldly unwise

A high-flying United Nations employee was robbed at gunpoint inside her Degraw Street apartment as she returned home on Feb. 27.

The 36-year-old Portuguese citizen told cops that she had almost gotten inside her building, which is between Fourth and Fifth avenues, at around 10:30 p.m. when a 5-foot-6, 150-pound man approached, pulled a gun and said, "Just give me the bag and don't move."

She complied with the demand and handed over the bag, which contained her UN identification card, her Belgian driver's license, \$200, a cellphone and her iPod.

The perp fled and was not found during a canvass of the area, cops said.

Big burglary

A thief hauled off more than \$6,500 in jewelry, computers and electronics from two Sixth Street apartments during the day on Feb. 28.

The first tenant, a 30-year-old woman, told cops that she wasn't home between 11:20 a.m. and 5:30 p.m., when the thief broke in through the kitchen window of the fourth-floor apartment, which is at 13th Street.

With no one home to stop him, the thug grabbed a 19-inch flat-screen TV, a Playstation gaming system, a valuable gold crucifix and a gold ring.

The other tenant, across the hall, told cops she lost a laptop, a cellphone, a \$2,000 watch and a diamond necklace and bracelet.

POLICE BLOTTER

Somehow, the perp got all of the goods out of the building without being seen by neighbors, cops said.

Love lost

Here's the latest example of why you should always be careful whom you bring home after a night of drinking and dancing.

Another Fifth Avenue joint was also broken into on Feb. 29. This time, the thief or thieves got away with a cash register and \$100 from the restaurant, which is between St. Marks Place and Warren Street.

Band of stole

Thieves who broke into a 14th Street apartment on Feb. 20 got more than cash and goods — they also got a man's wedding ring and a trip to the altar at the 78th Precinct, cops said.

The 31-year-old victim told police that he was not in the apartment, which is between Third and Fourth avenues, between 3 and 5 p.m.

That was enough time for the thieves to break in through the front door and take a laptop, an emerald ring, a pendant, a watch and the \$3,000 wedding band.

But the two men — ages 40 and 42 — were arrested within an hour, cops said, still in possession of the ill-gotten booty.

— Gersh Kuntzman

Bling ding

More than \$40,000 in fancy jewelry — including a \$12,000 Bulgari ring — was swiped out of the safe in a President Street apartment sometime between Feb. 15 and Feb. 25.

The victim, a 38-year-old woman of ample means, told cops that she didn't notice the crime until she opened her safe and discovered the missing bling.

She also told cops that the key to the safe is always kept in a hallway closet, making this safe-cracking a little easier than the ones in the movies.

In all, the thief got \$40,407 in rocks and gold from the unit, which is between Seventh and Eighth avenues.

Eating them

Thieves hit three restaurants and one nightclub in the past two weeks, cops said.

In the first case, a popular Seventh Avenue Italian wine bar was broken into sometime after closing on Feb. 19. The thief or thieves got only paychecks and W-2 forms, a precursor to a future identity theft.

The next day, the owner of a Fifth Avenue restaurant told cops that when he opened his eatery, which is at the corner of Third Street, at 4:30 a.m., he discovered that the front bar had been broken into and a cash box was missing.

68th Precinct

BAY RIDGE DYKER HEIGHTS

Boy robbed

A 16-year boy was beaten and robbed on Shore Road on Feb. 28.

The 36-year-old man, along with his wife, was first approached by the two thugs as they entered the driveway, which is near 19th Avenue, at around 1:05 a.m. The husband was punched repeatedly in the face and body and knocked to the ground. Meanwhile, the perps wrestled the purse from his wife, who was thrown onto the pavement.

The perps fled with the purse, which contained \$7,000, including credit and debit cards, while the victims were taken to Lutheran Medical Center to be treated for numerous bruises and scratches from the altercation.

Church swipe

You can even be robbed in church.

That's what one 47-year-old woman found out on Feb. 26 after she left her pocketbook unattended in a Seventh Avenue cathedral, which is between 63rd and 64th streets.

A diabolical crook stole the woman's purse and its contents, which are valued at \$369, from an unwatched table at around 10:30 p.m.

Watch hold-up

A man was held up at gunpoint as he was walking on Benson Avenue on Feb. 25.

The 33-year-old was near 23rd Avenue at around 11:35 p.m. when the thug approached, pulled out a black firearm and demanded all of the victim's property.

The man forked over his wallet and watch, which \$900 together, police said.

Puppy piracy

A 17th Avenue puppy boutique was robbed by a group of bandits that stole two miniature dogs from the popular shop on March 2.

The pooch-loving perps entered the pet store, which is near New Utrecht Avenue, at around 6:30 p.m. and promptly asked for two puppies to be taken out of the cages.

The clerk didn't think anything was amiss, as customers often hold and cuddle the stock.

Eventually, the perps spotted an opening and sprang for the front door with the puppies in hand as the owners buzzed out another customer, police said.

Hide the keys

A 41-year-old Bay Ridge Parkway mother dismissed her 8-year-old son's claim that he saw a strange man standing in the vestibule of their house on Feb. 25 — but the next day it was clear that something had happened after all.

Police say the family's car was stolen from the driveway of the house, which is located between Ninth and 10th avenues, using the car keys that are usually kept in the same vestibule. The car, a 2003 gray Volvo, is valued at \$30,000.

Apartment rob

A thief got through the double-locked doors of a 65th Street apartment on Feb. 28 and managed to get lots of goodies in the 7 a.m. heist.

The tenant of the apartment, which is between Third and Fourth avenues, lost jewelry, a safe and personal documents.

Check scams

Police are investigating two check-cashing scams that occurred last week.

The first took place on Feb. 25 when someone wrote unauthorized checks in the name of a 94th Street woman that totaled \$7,650.

A day later, four forged checks supposedly signed by an Fifth Avenue car dealership were cashed in Flatbush. The checks were made out to a former employee who ceased working with the company, which is located between 89th and 90th streets.

It's unclear if the crimes are related.

62nd Precinct

BENSONHURST

Driveway rob

A couple walking to the steps of their 70th Street home was beaten and robbed by a group of perps on March 1.

The 36-year-old man, along with his wife, was first approached by the two thugs as they entered the driveway, which is near 19th Avenue, at around 1:05 a.m. The husband was punched repeatedly in the face and body and knocked to the ground. Meanwhile, the perps wrestled the purse from his wife, who was thrown onto the pavement.

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Butterfingers

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The embarrased thief fled empty-handed.

Elderly break-in

An elderly woman returned to her 21st Avenue apartment to find a ransacked bedroom, her cash missing, and her walls covered in graffiti on Feb. 23.

The 84-year-old returned to her home, which is near 80th Street, at around 2 p.m. to find that the perps had ransacked her bedroom, swiping \$2,000 from beneath her mattress, police said.

To add insult to injury, the thief also left graffiti on the woman's bathroom wall, closet door and bed.

The elderly woman's apartment was dusted for prints, along with a bottle of soda that was sent out for DNA analysis. Also, the building has surveillance video installed, which will help in the investigation.

— Michael Giardina

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'Bombing' scare at Heights prep school

The Brooklyn Paper

84th Precinct

BOERUM HILL / DUMBO

A private school went under siege on Feb. 22 when a student received an anonymous online message from someone claiming that he would blow up the school.

The school, located on Joralemon Street near Clinton Street, learned of the threat around 10 am and went into "lockdown," meaning that students could not leave the building. Teachers went on teaching their classes, even as parents frantically called the school to figure out what was happening.

Police eventually determined that the person who sent the threat was a 17-year-old boy, 27, when he laughed at two guys fighting and ended up with a bump on his head.

Days later, cops arrested the perpetrator, a sophomore at the school. He was charged with a misdemeanor and released into his parents' custody.

Out the window
A burglar busted into a fifth-floor apartment on Remsen Street in broad daylight on Feb. 25.

All the occupants of the apartment, located near Clinton Street, left for the day around 9:30 am and didn't return until 8 pm.

When they came back, they were shocked to discover that a bedroom window was open and, worse, the burglar had made off with a digital camera and two laptops. The electronics were worth \$2,326, cops said.

Bank heist
A woman bank robber proved on Feb. 26 that the fainter sex is also capable of sticking up banks as well as the men.

The perp, a 26-year-old woman wearing a brown jacket and eye-

glasses, came up to the counter of a Livingston Street bank — located on East Galtain Place — around 1 pm and passed the teller a note demanding money.

"Let me see your hands," the woman said, evidently concerned that the teller would trip the alarm and summon the cops.

The perp didn't display a weapon, but the 18-year-old bank employee complied anyway, furling over \$2,740. The modern-day Bonnie (sans Clyde) fled.

88th Precinct
FORT GREENE CLINTON HILL

It's not funny
A man's sense of humor got him into trouble on Feb. 27, when he laughed at two guys fighting and ended up with a bump on his head.

The 47-year-old was hanging around the corner of Atlantic Avenue and Fort Greene place around 4 pm when he saw two men, one of whom he knew, fighting on the street. He started to chuckle, and his acquaintance noticed and turned to him.

"Stop laughing," he said. The bystander and the brawler were soon arguing, and the violent 26-year-old got fed up, went to his car, and pulled out a long metal object. He struck the older man in the head, causing injuries bad enough to send him to Brooklyn Hospital. But the joke was on the perp, as cops happened upon the scene and put him under arrest.

Drills nabbed
An electrician's van was broken into on Feb. 25, and the crook escaped with supplies for all the drilling he'll ever need to do.

The employee driving the van parked it on Clinton Avenue near Wyckoff Avenue around 7 am and returned about five hours later

POLICE BLOTTER

to discover that the van's passenger door was open and \$3,028 of drilling equipment was missing.

Hard knocks
A 14-year-old walking home from school was brutally beaten on Feb. 26 by a pair of older teens who could not have been happy when all they got was a Metrocard and a rare coin.

The victim was strolling down North Portland Avenue near Park Avenue around 4 pm when two 17-year-olds in black hoodies came up to him and asked him if he had a cellphone. He said he didn't, which was apparently the wrong answer, as they grabbed him and began going through his pockets.

When they tried to take his wallet, he began to resist, and the larger of the two thugs punched him in the face and began kicking him.

The bullies left without the wallet, however, taking only a student Metrocard and a British coin from 1912 with King George's face on it.

90th Precinct
WILLIAMSBURG BUSHWICK

School haze
Two schools were burglarized last week in incidents that netted criminals thousands of dollars in cash and electronics.

A Wilson Street facility was stripped of nearly \$8,000 worth of computers sometime between 4 pm on Feb. 25 and 9:30 am the next morning.

Thieves hit four classrooms in the building, which houses an elementary and charter school, between Bedford and Lee avenues, making off with nine Apple and Dell laptops worth a combined \$7,400.

Three days later, cops discovered another break-in at a second elementary school, this was one Berry Street between Grand and South First streets.

Cops said that between 1:20 pm on Feb. 25 and 10 am on Feb. 28, someone stole \$1,365 that an employee had left in a lockbox within a locked closet. She said she's the only person with a key to the closet.

Home invasion
Here's a morning buzz-kill: A woman and her boyfriend awoke in their South 11th Street apartment on Feb. 27 to find a man squatting by the window, disconnecting computer equipment.

After the rude awakening at 9:05 am, the boyfriend grabbed the burglar, who said, "Sorry," and then ran away from the apartment, which is between Wythe Avenue and Berry Street. He got away with \$800 and a \$120 computer mouse.

Jeep stolen
A \$55,000 Range Rover was stolen from the corner of Graham Avenue and Scholes Street on Feb. 24.

The 32-year-old owner of the fancy set of wheels said he parked at 4 am. When he returned four hours later, all that remained of the 2006 SUV was some broken glass.

Cyclist-thief
A thief on a bicycle snatched a purse from a woman as she walked at the corner of Moore Street and Manhattan Avenue on Feb. 27.

The 31-year-old said that a guy on a bike rode by at 4:05 pm and snatched her purse, before pedaling toward Graham Avenue. Inside her bag, the Humboldt Street resident had been carrying an ID, a Medicaid card, and a cellphone.

Mugged
Several thugs choked a woman and punched her in the face, before stealing her purse on March 3. The violent mugging happened at 11:55 pm, when the 26-year-old victim was at the corner of Cook Street and Graham Avenue. The thieves scored.

The victim, who was carrying \$8,076 inside a leather purse, received medical attention.

Gunpoint mug
A teenage boy was mugged at gunpoint on Kent Avenue on March 3.

Two hoodlums pulled a gun on a 17-year-old kid at 3 pm as he was walking between South Sixth Street and Broadway, on his way to work. They made off with \$100.

94th Precinct
GREENPOINT

Jaw broken
An assailant broke a pedestrian's jaw in multiple places on Feb. 24, after a woman started a conversation with another man.

The 30-year-old Bedford Avenue resident had been walking on North Eighth Street toward Bedford Avenue at 2:50 am when an unknown lady began chatting with him. How that precipitated a fight remains unclear, but one thing is for sure: a guy who looked about 24 punched the victim in a number of times, breaking his jaw in multiple places.

The jaw was wired shut at St. Vincent's Hospital in Manhattan.

Monitors stolen
With an apparent eye for irony, a thief stole 10 computer monitors from a delivery van parked on none other than Monitor Street on Feb. 26.

The deliveryman, 22, parked the GM van at the corner of Richardson Street at 12:15 pm, leaving the van's back door unlocked. When he returned 10 minutes later, the back of the van was open and 10 computer monitors were gone.

Whoever stole the \$239 screens left a footprint inside the van. Cops are doing the Clinkella trick to try to find their suspect.

Wallet swiped
A worker at a fancy, Meeker Avenue boutique hotel got her wallet swiped Feb. 29.

The 27-year-old Greenpoint Avenue resident had left her purse on the front desk of the new hotel, between Jackson and Wilber streets, only to discover at 11:15 pm that her wallet was gone.

When the victim called her bank, she found out that the thief had used her Washington Mutual card just 45 earlier, buying \$80 worth of fares at a Metrocard vending machine.

The wallet-snatcher needn't have gone to the effort. Inside the wallet, the victim had been carrying an monthly Metrocard, plus \$25.

Vintage steal
A car thief stole a 1966 Chevy Impala on March 2, after the car

parked it on a side street.

The car's owner, a 45-year-old Grand Street resident, told cops he left the two-door, black sedan on North 14th Street, between Nassau and Wythe avenues, at 9 am after his fuel pump broke.

When he returned to check on the muscle car at 5:30 pm, it was gone. He estimated its worth at \$10,000.

76th Precinct
CARROLL GARDENS RED HOOK / COBBLE HILL

Trade tools
Thieves on wheels plundered a parked commercial truck laden with valuable tools on Sackett Street on Feb. 21.

A witness eyeballed a man as he disembarked from a car driven by a woman near a van station between Columbia and Hicks streets at around 4 pm.

The thief jammed open a rear door and fished \$800 worth of gadgets from the vehicle, owned by a local home repair company.

Take-out
A well-known Smith Street restaurant was burgled for petty cash on Feb. 16.

An employee noticed that someone smashed a rear window after the restaurant, between Douglas and Degraw streets, closed at 2 am and before reopening at 12:30 pm.

Once inside the bistro, the worker discovered that \$100 had been stolen.

It's trucked up
Vandal's stole products and equipment from a truck parked in front of a business on Van Brunt Street sometime between Feb. 23 and 25.

A thief grabbed \$250 worth of paper — yes, paper — and a hand truck from the parked vehicle, which had been left between Visitation Place and Pioneer Street, during the 36-hour gap.

Bump and run
Two women staged a collision with another lady at the corner of Union and Court streets and stole her wallet on Feb. 25.

The victim, en route to the subway, thought nothing of the "accidental" bump from two tricksters — until she realized her wallet, containing \$10, and the coins were long gone.

— Mike McLaughlin

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Bag lady

DUMBO grocer wants to phase out plastic waste

By Dana Rubinstein
The Brooklyn Paper

Two businesses in DUMBO have begun weaning customers off the latest symbol of wasteful consumerism: the plastic shopping bag.

Foragers, the high-end grocery store at Front and Adams streets, has begun deducting 10 cents from the purchases of patrons who decline plastic bags. And Water Street Restaurant and Lounge has stopped delivering food in plastic bags.

"We really want our store to be as garbage-free as possible," said Anna Castellani, the store's owner.

Castellani said she's been trying to cure Brooklynites of their plastic addiction since opening her store two-and-a-half years ago, but said that only recently have customers become amenable to the idea.

"We were a little naive," said Castellani. "We thought every-

one knew how horrible plastic bags were for the environment and animals. They'd look at you and go, 'Of course not. Not only do I want one bag, but I want two or three,

and a few extra for my dogs.'" Castellani said she's noticed a change in that attitude recently, thanks to a spate of good press about the anti-plastic-bag movement.

Indeed, if the current plastic bag trend continues — and more governments join China, San Francisco, Ireland, Bhutan and Bangladesh in legislating against the bag — the plastic carrier may soon be as embarrassing an accoutrement as the gas-guzzling SUV.

In January, the City Council joined the worldwide trend, passing a law requiring stores with at least 5,000 square feet, or chain stores with five or more branches in the city, to collect plastic bags for recycling.

The goal of the bill, which goes into effect in July, is to save a tiny bit of the 12 million barrels of oil that are converted into plastic bags every year.

Opponents of the bill complain that plastic bags are a necessary convenience for New Yorkers, who can't pile groceries into their cars. And New Yorkers do tend to reuse their shopping bags several times be-



It's about time: Foragers owner Anna Castellani shows off all the money you'll save if you decline to take a plastic bag with your purchases.

fore finally discarding them.

"There may be some inconvenience [with the recycling bill], but that's the price we pay for the greater good," said Councilman David Yassky (D-Brooklyn Heights), one of the sponsors.

Foragers and Water Street are just the tip of the melting iceberg as far as DUMBO, and the rest of Brooklyn, is concerned.

Jane Kojima, a spokeswoman for the DUMBO Improvement District, said she's lined up about 20 businesses that will begin recycling plastic bags starting in March, once the group distributes canvas bags to every house-

hold in the neighborhood.

As usual, the Park Slope Food Co-op, which charges members for plastic bags on the honor system, is way ahead of the green movement — though not as far ahead as its general manager would like.

"We collect less than half of what we should" because people don't always drop a nickel in the collection box, said Co-op GM Joe Holtz.

This spring, the Co-op plans to up the ante, voting to entirely eliminate all disposable bags — plastic and paper — from the co-op's inventory. Holtz predicted that the measure would pass.

Castellani said her three-week-old initiative appears to be having some effect. About 50 percent of her customers now decline plastic bags.

Corey Szopinski, who frequently fills up his stomach — and a biodegradable container — with Foragers' sublime mac and cheese, said he's thrilled with the new initiative.

"Business owners need to start thinking about reducing waste," said Szopinski. "[And] now that they have biodegradable containers and potato starch utensils [which are awesome], I go there instead of to restaurants that use Styrofoam or plastic."

Hamlet of Boro Hall

Marty leads in poll, can't decide on mayoral run

By Dana Rubinstein
The Brooklyn Paper

Last week's stunning mayoral poll put Borough President Markowitz ahead of other contenders to the City Hall throne, but the Bep's differing over whether he will run is allowing valuable fundraising opportunities to dissolve into the ether.

Markowitz led the Marist/WNBC poll with 18 percent to once and future mayoral hopeful Rep. Anthony Weiner's 13 percent, but he's far behind the declared mayoral candidates in a more-important survey: the amount of money in his campaign war chest.

And time's a-wadin'.

"There are two things in politics that you can't make more of: time and money," said Scott Levenson, a political consultant with the Advance Group. "And money takes time."

Indeed, Markowitz acknowledged as much in an interview with The Brooklyn Paper.

"My indecision is not helping me," Markowitz said.

"The train is already slowly moving out of the station. Every day and every week and every month I don't make a decision, the chances of having a seat on this train are going to be diminished."

the term-limited Markowitz needs money — but he's raised only \$900,000 to City Comptroller Bill Thompson's \$4.2 million, Weiner's \$3.5 million and City Council Speaker Christine Quinn's \$2.4 million.

Markowitz's continuing indecision is particularly odd, given that he just outpaced all of those candidates in the Marist poll, experts said. It is common for candidates to turn this week's fundraising pitch letter — yet Markowitz hasn't done so.

Markowitz isn't the only one who's undecided. The plurality of voters in the Marist poll — 36 percent — didn't offer a preference for an election that won't take place until September, 2009.

The undecideds didn't surprise Marist Institute Director Lee Miringoff.

"The race is very fluid and wide open," he said. "The fact that Markowitz is in front does show some support for him, and certainly would be encouraging for him."



Others said that an unconventional politician like Markowitz could simply be pursuing an unconventional strategy.

"A lot of the politicians and political professionals don't appreciate how strong the average Brooklynite feels about Marty," said Councilman David Yassky (D-Brooklyn Heights). "People feel that he is genuinely on their side, and that's a very, very powerful thing."

Hank Sheinkopf, a political consultant, agreed.

"The danger with publicly announcing is it might be a disaster for him," said Sheinkopf. "He's floated the balloon. No one killed the balloon yet. So it's still floating."

"The danger with publicly announcing is it might be a disaster for him," said Sheinkopf. "He's floated the balloon. No one killed the balloon yet. So it's still floating."

Should Marty run? FLASHPOLL at <http://BrooklynPaper.com>



The MTA says it will convert a freight line into a new subway line.

MTA gets on right side of tracks

Hey, Bay Ridge, how about a new subway? Wait 40 years

By Mike McLaughlin
The Brooklyn Paper

Imagine taking a subway from Bay Ridge to Manhattan — without ever entering Manhattan.

It could happen — not anytime soon, mind you — under a just-announced Metropolitan Transportation Authority plan to turn an underutilized freight line that cuts through southern Brooklyn into a subway route that would cross three boroughs and intersect with 17 existing subway lines.

It's the G train — only actually useful? "It's a transportation choice that doesn't require using slow buses, or taking a subway into Manhattan," said Jeffrey Zupan, of the

Regional Plan Association, the civic group that pitched the idea to the MTA in the mid-1990s.

The Brooklyn-Bronx passage would travel along an existing freight line and connect to subways like the A/C, R and 2/3 that require out-of-the-way trips into the city to board.

MTA Executive Director Elliott Sander dropped the bombshell in his "State of the MTA" speech on Monday.

"We need to take a close look at the Regional Plan Association's circumferential subway line," said Sander.

Much of the Brooklyn right-of-way had previously been designated as part of the Cross-Brooklyn Expressway, a project that collapsed in the 1970s.

This time around, Bay Ridgites liked what they heard, though they weren't exactly dancing in the streets.

"I'm a man of big vision, too, so certainly I'm in support of the idea," said Councilman Vince Gentile (D-Bay Ridge). "That said, when reality sets in, we have more immediate short-term concerns" such as better bus service and an end to the frustrating R-train shuttle.

Gentile has good reason to be fixated on the here and now. Sander's new "cross-town local" is on line behind Manhattan's Second Avenue line, a link between Grand Central and Penn stations, and the 7-train extension to the West Side.

In other words, this good thing will only come to those Bay Ridgites who wait (and

wait and wait).

The New York and Atlantic Railway, which currently sends two freight trains a day along the route, said it would be happy to share the wide railway right of way.

"There's enough room for us to operate alongside subway trains," said company President Paul Victor, who estimated that his freight service eliminates 100,000 truck trips per year. "In some parts, they'd have to add tracks — and that can be an enormous amount of money."

"Enormous" is about as close to a cost estimate that anyone is willing to put up. MTA spokesman Aaron Donovan said the new subway is "just a concept right now," and he declined to say how much it would cost.

MOCADA'S HOT SHOW...

Continued from page 1

have put bull's-eyes on the backs of black New Yorkers." But Scott wouldn't bite.

"These works are against police brutality and murder," said Scott, who has lived and created art in Brooklyn for the past 15 years. "What should be controversial is these killings, not this artwork."

Gallery-goers agreed. "I think that people need to know about these issues," said Dessanaya Miller, 19, of Clinton Hill. "No matter who they may offend or hurt, these issues are real."

Most visitors believe that the tiny museum should continue to receive taxpayer support.

"The public should continue to fund the museum," said Lewis, a Bedford-Stuyvesant resident. "They say they don't like the fact that government money funded this exhibit, but no one seems to be talking about the fact that government money also funded these instances of police brutality."

Even those who disagree with Scott's art believe that his works should stay on the walls.

"It's this guy's point of view," said Isaac Cohen, a carpenter from Park Slope. "I don't know if I agree with it completely, but it's certainly valid."

Agree or disagree, it's MoCADA's right to show the work, constitutional experts have said — even if it's on the taxpayer's dollar.

The First Amendment dictates that artists have freedom of expression and museums have the right to show whatever works they choose," said Eddie Rodriguez, an attorney from



Ernestine Holding, of Park Slope, takes a look at Dread Scott's "Sign of the Times" at MoCADA this week.

Sunset Park who came to see the exhibit on Sunday.

Art experts aren't surprised that Scott's work is inciting such strong emotional responses.

"I can see how it engenders both the admiration and the ire of some people," said Donna Moran, chair of fine arts at nearby Pratt Institute. "I think his work has a real, political message — it's not just shock value."

Scott is no stranger to controversy — and neither are Brooklyn art museums. Scott drew scorn from the first President Bush for his 1989 piece, "What is the Proper Way to Display a U.S. Flag?" — which required viewers to step on the Star Spangled Banner in order to sign a book to answer the question.

But the brohaha over the MoCADA exhibit is more reminiscent of the controversy surrounding the Brooklyn Museum's

1999 show, "Sensation."

The provocative exhibit included Chris Ofili's painting, "The Holy Virgin Mary," which depicts the religious icon as a black woman surrounded by elephant dung and butterfly-shaped clippings from pornographic magazines.

The work outraged Catholic organizations and then-Mayor Giuliani, who attempted to cut the museum's funding. The museum won the subsequent court case, and Giuliani failed in his bid for president.

While the Giuliani administration lined up against the Brooklyn Museum nearly a decade ago, Brooklyn's elected officials are siding with MoCADA.

"I will fight vigorously for MoCADA against oppression and censorship of any kind," said Councilwoman Leticia James (D-Fort Greene). "The only group that's making this a

controversy is the PBA."

As such, MoCADA founder and curator Laurie Cumbo sees a threat to her museum's future.

"I think the PBA should retract their remarks until they at least see the exhibit — then we can have a discussion," Cumbo said. "It seems that they should make an investigation before making inflammatory remarks."

I hope this is not an example of how they conduct police work."

Dread Scott's "Welcome to America" runs through June 1 at the Museum of Contemporary Art of the African Diaspora (60 Hanson Pl., between South Portland Avenue and South Elliot Place in Fort Greene), 11 am-6 pm. Closed Mondays and Tuesdays. Scott himself will conduct a tour of the exhibit on Thursday, March 13 at 7 pm for a \$4 additional charge. Call (718) 230-0492 or visit www.mocada.org for information.



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Corrections
In a front-page "Explain" last week ("Bonds bombshell killing projects," March 1), The Paper reported that Atlantic Yards developer Bruce Ratner must pay a \$500,000 penalty if 50 percent of the project's rentals are not below-market-rate units. In fact, under the Community Benefits Agreement, there is no penalty if Ratner does not build the units.
And in "A big 'Toll' on the Gowanus Canal," The Paper misreported the number of units in the Toll Brothers' proposed development along the canal. The project would include 577 apartments.
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OUR OPINION

Adrift on the canal

The Gowanus Canal is a national disgrace, a toxin- and sewage-filled corpse of water that has been left to fester during decades of neglect by city, state and federal authorities.

Other cities — notably San Antonio — have cleaned up their once-polluted waterways and turned them into residential communities and tourist attractions, but our Gowanus Canal still cuts through the prosperous neighborhoods of Park Slope, Carroll Gardens and Cobble Hill like a Third World gutter, a smelly culvert that divides Brooklyn physically and psychologically.

For decades, there has been talk of cleaning up the waterway, but talk — and government — has been cheap. City officials don't manage to reopen a valve that flushes relatively clean water from New York Harbor through the canal, but that has only made the Gowanus more habitable to fish.

In the meantime, government hasn't bothered with the heavy lifting — fixing an antiquated sewer system so that raw sewage no longer cascades into the canal during heavy rainfall. And now, the federal government says it would be satisfied if the canal could make it up to the level of being a spawning ground for fish.

That ruling was fine for lower aquatic life, but it basically sold us all down the river.

But there is an alternative to government back-passing: Develop the canal zone as a residential community.

Right now, the city is moving to rezone properties along the canal from manufacturing to residential use. And even before that process begins, a major developer, Toll Brothers, has announced its plan for a 577-unit development on the west bank of the canal between Carroll and Second streets.

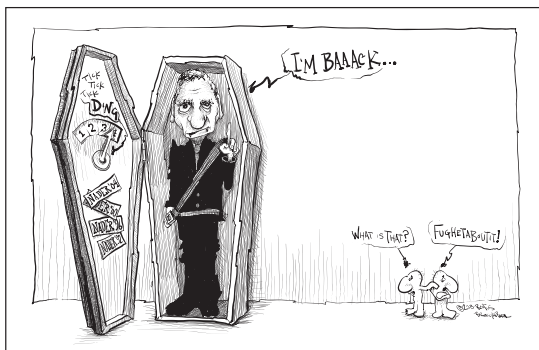
Another waterfront site further south, long known as "the Public Place," is also being redeveloped into a residential community with open space and a canal-front esplanade.

Predictably, naysayers in the community are fighting the rezoning out of distrust of developers.

But the only way to create a community that's actually invested in the health of the canal is to create a community that lives along the canal. Otherwise, there's no pressure on elected officials to do the jobs have to answer.

A meeting this week showcased how much hostility there is to development. When one Toll Brothers representative asked if opponents would prefer retaining the filthy canal in exchange for no development, some people — shockingly — said yes.

ALL DRAWN OUT



LETTERS

Voters to Rep. Clarke: Listen to us and back Barack

To the editor,

I thought you would be interested in this letter I wrote to Rep. Yvette Clarke, given your coverage of the superdelegate story ("Hi! B'd'n superdelegates to rescue," Feb. 28).

Dear Rep. Clarke:
I am writing to you regarding your status as a superdelegate in the current Democratic Primary race for President of the United States. I saw in a recent article that you support Hillary Clinton's candidacy even though a majority of voters in our district voted for Barack Obama.

I understand the historic nature of this race — the Democrats have the best chance ever of winning back the White House, and it would be incredibly exciting to see either a woman or an African-American as our next president.

I voted for Barack Obama because I believe in his message of change, and because

I believe he is the best candidate in a race against John McCain.

As a constituent, I appeal to you to honor the will of the voters in our district and to support Barack Obama as the next Democratic Presidential nominee.

Amanda Aaron, Park Slope

Parking? Lots

To the editor,
Residential Parking Permits may give residents a "bunting license" to look for parking, but given the unprecedented amount of development in the neighborhoods around Downtown Brooklyn, it will hardly improve one's chances of getting a parking spot ("Pay-to-park plan cheered," Feb. 9).

Residential Parking Permits are one of several tools that the city needs to employ in the coming years to manage supply and demand of our increasingly strained roadways.

Atlantic Yards, for example, is expected to generate as many as 20,000 new car trips a day. For the neighborhoods surrounding Atlantic Yards, permit parking is needed to discourage arena patrons from cruising for free parking.

But permits by themselves won't be enough if those cars continue to drive to the arena and park in local lots. The city should insist that Forest City Ratner develop alternate plans for its "interim" parking lot, which would accommodate as many as 1,400 cars.

Without improvements to public transportation and disincentives to drive, the costs of free parking and free driving will continue to be borne by residents and pedestrians through increased accidents, elevated asthma rates, noise pollution and degraded quality of life.

Danar Ortolowski, Prospect Heights

Save Green Church

To the editor,

I'm not a church-going person. I'm sure many people probably think I should be so I can find God and be "saved."

Yet on Feb. 16, I went to church — the Bay Ridge United Methodist Church on Overington and Fourth avenues in Bay Ridge. I stood outside with a sign and chanted "Save the Green Church."

I stopped strangers to tell them that we need to save this church ("More 'Green' to be torn down," Feb. 9).

I found it ironic that the congregation isn't trying to save me, yet I am trying to save it. The church has sold out to a developer, who wants to tear down a building on the National Register of Historic Places and put up condos.

I've lived in Bay Ridge for over 30 years. I walk its streets and admire its grand Victorian homes, with their turrets and columned porches. I gaze at the rows of townhouses made of brick, limestone or brownstone, with their original cornices and

railings and imagine the interiors with pocket doors and moldings.

I also stumble upon construction sites of recently demolished homes and cringe at the thought of what will replace them: nondescript brick or stucco buildings with lifeless facades.

And I always think, "What a shame."

What will we have left if the Green Church is demolished? A fleeting memory of what once stood there. But we don't need memories; we need that church preserved as a reverence of this neighborhood's past and as a hope for the future. Save the Green Church.

Helen Maalik, Bay Ridge

Road rage

To the editor:
I've always thought that the Congress Street on-ramp to the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway was very dangerous ("Smash his," Feb. 16).

Drivers can help protect themselves by making sure the car in front of them has successfully merged before trying to merge themselves. I also think a traffic sign to this effect would go a long way towards preventing accidents.

Ideally, a better entrance ramp would be built, but a simpler and faster solution would be to reduce the number of lanes on the Staten Island-bound BQE from three lanes to two approaching the Atlantic Avenue exit. When it was done in the past, it

allowed drivers on the Congress Street on-ramp to have a no-merge situation, and all it took were a few cans of paint.

Perhaps you could forward these suggestions to the Department of Transportation.

Michael Kilfoyle, Brooklyn Heights
Editor's note: Consider them forwarded.

Down on Towns

To the editor,
While our Constitution is under a constant threat of being annulled by the current president, I found it beyond shameful that my congressman, Rep. Ed Towns was cross-examining Roger Clemens.

I need not go through the litany of issues that this ineffectual Democratic Congressman hasn't taken up, but seeing Towns's picture in the Daily News last week, in connection with these hearings steamed me so much that I had to stop reading and count to 10.

In case Rep. Towns wasn't aware, East New York, Fort Greene, Bedford-Stuyvesant and Ocean Hill has a sub-prime mortgage crisis, along with the highest murder rates, black male incarceration rates and HIV/AIDS case rates in the city.

Ask those people about Roger Clemens's alleged steroid use and you'll get a hardy laugh and a suggestion on how you can amuse yourself in private.

The mediocre representation that the 10th Congressional District has tolerated since

Ronald Reagan's first term has made our voice virtually silent in Washington.

Our congressman has amassed no significant clout after 25 years on the Hill, and it's safe to say that he never will.

Ed Towns should do the good people of Brooklyn a favor and retire — today! New Blood is warranted in this disadvantaged district.

If re-elected, get ready for Towns's hearings on who sold Amy Winehouse crack!

Terrance Knox, Fort Greene

The writer is co-president of Lambda Independent Democrats of Brooklyn.

Grand plan

To the editor,

One of the points that the Grand Army Plaza Coalition made very clear in its recent presentation to Community Board 6 was that a two-way Prospect Park West would not necessarily be an outcome of a makeover of the Plaza, but it could enable a two-way PPW should that be deemed desirable ("Reinventing the (traffic) wheel," on-line, March 1).

More than this, though, please understand that there is no firm alternative plan for dealing with the traffic in Grand Army Plaza at this time.

The CB6 presentation merely raised one vision that came from the Coalition's community planning workshop in March 2007.

Michael Cair, Park Slope

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March 8, 2008

Food for thought

TV's Ted Allen talks about dining out and giving back

By Adam Rathe
The Brooklyn Paper

Ted Allen's one lucky foodie. On Monday, March 10, the Clinton Hill resident and television personality — he refers to himself as “cable famous” — will have a chance to combine two of his great passions, food and philanthropy, when he hosts “Savor,” an evening of fun, fundraising and French fare being held to benefit the Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC).

Allen, best known for his food and wine expertise on television shows like “Queer Eye for the Straight Guy,” “Top Chef” and “Iron Chef,” will emcee the benefit for the non-profit GMHC, which works extensively to educate Brooklynites about HIV and AIDS.

“I feel like I'm not worthy,” Allen said. “I've done a lot of this kind of stuff in the last two years, and one of the nicest things about when you get a little bit of cable fame is that you can really help organizations that you believe in, and that's a real thrill.”

The fundraiser, which will also honor activist Urvashi Vaid, will include a live and silent auction and a cocktail reception, but most appealing to Allen is the four-course French dinner, prepared by notable chefs from Manhattan restaurants like Aureole, Orsay and Mas (Farnhouse). Having lived in Clinton Hill for eight months, though, Allen knows that Manhattan doesn't have the French food market cornered.

“One of the nice surprises about my neighborhood is the French population, which I had no idea about before,” said Allen, who frequents Chez Oscar in Fort Greene and raves about Abistro on Carlton Avenue. The neighborhood's restaurants aren't the only place for a gourmand to grab a snack, though.



DINING

“Savor” will be held at 7 pm on March 10 at Skylight Studios (225 Hudson St. in Manhattan). Tickets are \$1,000. For information, call (212) 367-1557 or visit www.gmhcn.org.

“I'm over the moon about Green Grape Provisions. I bought groceries there two nights ago to make a Moroccan chicken dish,” said Allen, whose kitchen is about to be remodeled. “It's not a cheap place but there's no place anywhere around here; they don't stock rack of lamb at the Associated. It fills a huge need for people who are into food.”

“One of the nice surprises about my neighborhood is the French population.”

— Ted Allen

With the popularity of reality shows featuring cooking — like the ones Allen stars in — it's no surprise that Brooklynites seem to be trying their hand at making their own gourmet meals instead of always going out to eat.

“There is so much growth and interest in food, wine, good coffee, chocolate and cheese,” said Allen, “it only makes sense that more people are taking an interest in it.”



Living here in Allen-town: Clinton Hill food guru Ted Allen savors Brooklyn's French fare and BBQ outposts alike. Among Allen's TV ventures are (far left) “Iron Chef” (with Mark Dacascos and Mario Batali) and (bottom) “Top Chef” (with Padma Lakshmi).

years ago, a friend of mine had an apartment in SoHo and had to borrow chairs from her neighbors if she wanted to have more people over for dinner. It's hard to cook when you don't have space or the right tools.”

French food, whether prepared at home or in a restaurant, is well tread in the borough — most neighborhoods have at least one serviceable place. It's messier eats, like barbecue, that Allen thinks is the latest fad to hit Kings County.

“The big trend right now, that I've noticed, is all the great barbecue in Brooklyn,” Allen noted. “I've been to Smoke Joint and Little Piggy Market [in Fort Greene] and Fette Sau in Williamsburg. I love eating that way — it's got great flavor.”

As far as things to come, however, Allen has more on his mind than just barbecue. While his home is still undergoing renovations — “Clinton Hill has this bohemian, literary artsy vibe that you don't find in Chelsea anymore. Living in a high-rise, stacked up in little boxes, you don't talk to people, and [Barry Rice and I] are into that corny, community vibe” — he's awaiting the March 12 debut of the third season of “Top Chef” and will continue to appear on “Iron Chef” as well.

Additionally, Allen is working on pilots for two new shows, both having to do with food, but couldn't reveal much more.

“I'm looking for another TV home,” he said. “Judging is a lot of fun, but I'm not hosting those shows.”

For now, his hosting energies are all focused on “Savor,” where some of his television cohorts will also be in attendance.

“I got a text the other day from the infamous Canon Kresley [also of “Queer Eye for the Straight Guy” fame] telling me he'll be in the audience, and will probably heckle me.”

But Allen is happy to take some ribbing for what he considers to be a good cause. “And it's cheaper, too,” he said. “When you host, you don't have to donate.”



Indeed, even those who attend the \$1,000-a-ticket “Savor” event will be sent home with recipes from GMHC supporters including Liz Smith, Tim Gunn and Miss Universe 2007, Ryo Mori, to try out in their own kitchens. Of course, cooking at home is made exponentially easier when your kitchen isn't the cramped, contortionist's affair inside most New York apartments.

“Exploring the kitchen can be hard to do when you live here,” said Allen. “A couple of

DINING

Ciao, chow

Dust off your bibs and elastic-waist slacks, “Brooklyn Eats” is back! The ultimate unswaged celebration of the borough's restaurant scene, which was an annual event from 1997 through 2006 at the Brooklyn Marriott in Downtown Brooklyn, has announced its 2008 date and a new locale: April 30 at Steiner Studios in the Brooklyn Navy Yard.

BROOKLYN EATS!

The tasting event — which was cancelled in 2007 to be “reformatted,” according to organizers at the time — will feature 30 restaurants. This year's edition is a departure from previous “Eats” as it will be organized by neighborhood and will include representatives from the New York City Association of Hotel Concierges and Tour Operators and the Guides Association of New York City.

At the last “Brooklyn Eats,” in September 2006, 44 of the borough's restaurants participated and scholarships were awarded to three New York City College of Technology hospitality management students, insuring that the borough's culinary talent continues to flourish.

“Brooklyn Eats” will be held from 6 pm to 8:30 pm on April 30 at Stage 6 at Steiner Studios in the Brooklyn Navy Yard. For information, visit www.brooklynneatsonline.com. — Adam Rathe

MUSIC

‘Power trip’

For her performing debut with the Brooklyn Philharmonic on March 8 at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, musician Leila Josefowicz is going to plug in her violin.

John Adams' “Dharma at Big Sur” calls for an electronic violin, but its challenges haven't dimmed Josefowicz's enthusiasm for the work.

“It's one of my specialty pieces,” the violinist told GO Brooklyn. “I love it. It's a hybrid piece between a western composition and an Indian-style raga. The funny thing is, it's neither one nor the other, but walks the line in between.”

Performing with amplification does bring risks, Josefowicz admitted.

“It's very difficult to do, and I'm one of the few traditional soloists today who does this,” she explained. “I have a speaker behind me, because it's amplified. I wouldn't hear myself otherwise.”

“This is a major tradition that's being broken,” she continued. “In an acoustic concerto, the orchestra might overwhelm the soloist, but here, it's the other way around, which is kind of a power trip for me!” For more information, call (718) 468-5700 or visit www.brooklynphilharmonic.org. — Kevin Filipski



MUSIC

Classic rock

“In our current commercial and popular culture, there may be no other rhapsody considered more celebrated than Queen's “Bohemian Rhapsody.”

Sung Jin Hong, artistic director and conductor of One World Symphony, told GO Brooklyn. And on March 9, the Dumas Park-based conductor will lead his orchestra in a performance of the song, as well as rhapsodies by Rachmaninoff, Brahms and Liszt in “Rhapsody: Metal vs. Classical.”

To more fully capture the sound that Queen created, Sung is employing the vocal group The Fault Line (pictured) as a performance of the song, as well as rhapsodies by Rachmaninoff, Brahms and Liszt in “Rhapsody: Metal vs. Classical.”

For more information, call (718) 462-7270 or visit www.oneworldsymphony.org. — Adam Rathe

For some orchestras, this might be a real stretch, but for One World, it's just an extension of the classical tradition.

Said Hong, “The daredevil virtuosos Paganini and Liszt were considered rock stars and celebrities.”

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Grape expectations

Ridge native Lorraine Bracco bottles namesake wines

By Lisa J. Curtis
GO Brooklyn Editor

What does an Italian-American girl from Bay Ridge do after racking up Oscar and Emmy nominations for her acting? Why she starts up her own wine business, of course.

Lorraine Bracco isn't one to rest on her laurels — including her Academy Award nomination for "Goodfellas," her several Emmy and Golden Globe noms from her "Sopranos" days and her recent work on NBC's "Lipstick Jungle" — so the model-turned-actress decided that it was time to explore her passion for vino by launching Bracco Wines.

"Why not? I love it," Bracco, 53, told GO Brooklyn. "I didn't want to sell makeup and perfume. This was a fun thing to do. I go to Italy and go to all different wineries and pick out wine. ... This suited my personality a lot more."

Bracco said her oenophilia took root when she lived in France in the 1970s and early '80s, but she didn't start actually bottling the stuff until two and a half years ago.

And now that her wines are in bottles, Bracco is busily meeting with restaurateurs to get them into the glasses of local diners. In January, she hosted a tasting at Austin's Steakhouse on Fifth Avenue in Bay Ridge, just a few blocks from Bracco's childhood home on 85th Street and Seventh Avenue.

"I am what I am and my upbringing in Brooklyn was definitely a big part of that," said Bracco. "It's absolutely a happy homecoming."

And for this entrepreneur, home, family and wine all go together.

"To me, life is absolutely about making dinner, going out to dinner with friends and family. That's one of the best parts of life."

Last week, Bracco threw a launch party for her wines at the Hard Rock Cafe in Manhattan and was joined in the celebration by her "Sopranos" friends — and Brooklyn natives — Dominic Chianese and Steven Schirripa.

Although Bracco is a self-described "big red girl," she has a range of wines in her portfolio: Pinot Grigio delle Venezie, rose, Montepulciano d'Abruzzo, Primitivo, Chianti Classico, Chianti Classico Riserva, Amarone Classico,



Family affair: Actress-entrepreneur Lorraine Bracco toasts the success of Bracco Wines with her brother Sal at Austin's Steakhouse in Bay Ridge. The bottles' labels feature vintage tarot card designs.

Barolo and Brunello di Montalcino. Bracco's Chiantis are best with steak, while her dry rose "goes really well with seafood," she said.

While Bracco might live a glamorous life, her wines don't have Fifth Avenue price tags.

"My Montepulciano is really a staple, red table wine. I love it. It's inexpensive, which I think is fabulous. It's not an overpowering kind of wine. It's a wine that should be consumed right away, compared to the Barolo, that you can keep in your cellar for a long time and would get better and increase in value."

And while you can pop her Barolo in your cellar, Bracco said it's "very drinkable. Great with a big meal, with meats and stews and things like that. It won't smash you over the head."

Before you smash yourself over the head at the news that yet another celebrity has started making wine — joining filmmaker Francis Ford Coppola; comic Dan Aykroyd; rocker Sting; the "smart" Smothers Brother, Tom; football great Joe Montana; Met star Tom Seaver; and even NASCAR driver Jeff Gordon — cut Bracco a little slack: She's a wine pioneer in an important way.

"I'm the first woman coming out with a line," she said. "I like that. I'm the first actress. Wish me luck. Women are starting to get into wines a lot more, which is great. There are some, like Gina Gallo, who took over her father's or grandfather's business, but compared to 20,000 men, maybe there are 1,000 women."

Bracco's appreciation for food developed at her family table, so perhaps it's not surprising that when it came to selling her wines she turned to her big brother Sal for his expertise.

"Sal is retired, and he's young at 57,

but I said that's too bad for you. I want you to help me with [Bracco Wines]," said Bracco. "His experience was head of sales for a medical company. I said, 'listen, what's the difference between selling medical equipment or wine?' [The partnership] has been great. I must say."

While one might not be surprised to see a celebrity's face on their foods, a la Paul Newman, you won't see Bracco's name on her bottles.

"We thought that would have been cheesy," said Bracco with a laugh. Instead, her bottles feature old tarot cards with figures holding grapes and cups. "It's cute and different."

At the moment, the actress said she has a lot on her plate with expanding the distribution of the wines — she's hoping to sell 45,000 cases in 2008 — but she has big dreams for the future of Bracco Wines.

"I would eventually like to blend my own wines," said Bracco. "But this is a baby company, right now."

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Undersize me

If you ask Anthony McErlain, one good bar deserves another. McErlain is the proprietor of two establishments on Park Slope's Fifth Avenue: the two-year-old Black Sheep Pub, which, he said, serves "typical bar food" and the tonier Cafe Tapeo, an altogether different animal that opened in August.

"I've done a lot of traveling," McErlain told GO Brooklyn. "I like the way they dine in Spain and Europe where groups share lots of small plates. It's a very social, laid-back experience."

Setting out to emulate the overseas model, he crafted a 40-seat room that resembles a country farmhouse.

"I wanted everything to look old," he said, so the walls are covered with layers of plaster, not paint, and the bar is fashioned from reclaimed 150-year-old wood. Come spring, he'll offer sidewalk seating on Bergen Street.

To accompany the global wine selec-

tion (\$7-\$9 a glass) and 20-plus beer varieties, Chef Corey Lewis devised a menu of small plate, Spanish-style taps. With "New World pierogis" (picnured), dumplings filled with farmer cheese and accompanied by triple seared onion and fruit compote, and "devilish eggs," stuffed with shrimp salad and crowned with "rebiko" (flying fish roe), in the roundup, it's safe to say the borders of Lewis's Spain are rather broad.

Cafe Tapeo (52 Fifth Ave. at Bergen Street in Park Slope) accepts American Express, MasterCard and Visa. Small plates: \$4-\$12. Wine by the glass: \$7-\$9. The bar is open for dinner from 5 pm until 2 am on weeknights and until 4 am on weekends. Subway: B, Q, 2, 3, 4 and 5 to Atlantic Wood. For more information, call (718) 636-1066 or visit the Web site www.cafetapeo.com. — Tina Barry

BREAKING

Brooklyn Heights native Nat Rubin is opening the long-awaited **Moxie Spot** at 81 Atlantic Ave. at Hicks Street in the next two weeks. Inspired by his own need to find a local, kid-friendly restaurant, Rubin has created a space for both adults and children that will offer activities and a smorgasbord of healthy, family-friendly food by Chef Chris McGee (formerly of VYNL in Manhattan). From starters like Peking duck rolls, quesadillas and sesame noodles to sandwiches, daily dinner specials, pizzas and breakfast all day, the restaurant will cater to the pickiest of palates, regardless of age.

Brooklyn's favorite separated-at-birth twins, Paula Bernstein and Elise Schein — authors of "Identical Strangers" — will be feted at the second annual Women Against MS Lunch at Cipriani 23 in Manhattan on Thursday, March 13. Gala lunches and long-lost twins? This could be a soap opera! For more information or to make a donation, call (212) 453-3208 or e-mail jgwaters@msny.org.

Congratulations to our pals at Park Slope's **Red, White & Bubbly**. The labels for their Brooklyn Wine Company brand — which feature artist Ryan Seslow's rendering of the Brooklyn Bridge — just took home a 2008 International Design Award from "How" magazine.

Park Slopes are in a tizzy over the rumored closing of **Red Hot**

CHEWS

Utz is out! That's right, **Brooklyn Label** founder and head chef Cody Utzman has left the perpetually packed Greenpoint cafe due to irreconcilable differences with his business partners. In an exclusive announcement made on The Brooklyn Paper's Web site, Utzman said, "I fully intend to complete my mission statement of bringing the most excellent products, services, coffee and neighborhood business improvements to Greenpoint." He also said he's working on a new restaurant project set to open this summer, so keep reading **Breaking Chews** for the latest developments.

Over in Carroll Gardens, Patrick Watson and Michele Prada, owners of Stinky Bklyn and Smith & Vine, opened **The Jakewalk**, a bar in the former Queens space, at 282 Smith St., on Friday. Making the best of its owners' expertise, the bar will serve wine and cheese as well as cured meats, cocktails and a fondue of the day.

"It's a project we were working on before Smith & Vine," Watson told GO Brooklyn three days prior to the opening. "The two partners who are going to be operating it — Matt Devriendt and Ann Form — have been managing Smith & Vine for the last two years and were in restaurants and bartending for many years. So, when the time came, we were able to put it together."

"It's going to be the top 100 ingredients from Stinky and Smith & Vine," he raved. "We have over 100 whiskies and 40 wines by the glass — we'll have \$5 glasses of wine! We

Moxie Spot on Atlantic Avenue is set to open in two weeks.

just had a feeling somebody would do a wine bar on Smith Street, and we wanted to make sure it was us."

GO Brooklyn was sad to hear that the **Brick Oven Gallery** in Williamsburg, a great pizza shop with a stellar backyard and an eggplant dish called "Brooklyn Caviar," has packed it in.

Any Ruth's, which was slated to open and start serving its legendary soul food on Valentine's Day, has now delayed its opening until May.

Schnack, the Columbia Street Waterfront District favorite, will be closing in the coming weeks.

"We expect to close soon... probably in the next few weeks, but I don't know exactly," owner Harry Hawk told GO Brooklyn.

Buck's Lodge, the four-year-old Brooklyn hip-hop honky-tonk bar, also decided to ride off into the sunset. With **Magnetic Field** closing up shop at the end of March, will there be any place left to have fun on Atlantic Avenue?

Got a dining tip? E-mail us at GO@brooklynpaper.com. — Adam Rathe

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At the Right 'Notes'

Brick Theater's innovative new adaptation of Dostoyevsky's classic sparkles in the dark

By **Deirdre Donovan**
for the Brooklyn Paper

Williamsburg's Brick Theater is heating up the winter theater scene with its reprise of its critically acclaimed production of Fyodor Dostoyevsky's "Notes from Underground." This five-part dramatic oratorio, which runs through March 22, explores the masochism of the legendary Underground Man and mashes his rancid diatribes with a soundtrack of Russian tavern songs and string quartets. Impeccably directed and adapted by Michael Gardner, this intense, 90-minute show is a must-see for adventure players.

This was my first visit to the Brick, and I was immediately struck by its unique protocol in escorting ticket holders to their seats. Just before showtime, a staff guide leads the audience from the lobby area, through a narrow passageway, to the actual performance space. It's enough to make Alice in Wonderland nervous.

I immediately noticed the theater's darkness and quiet; candlelight flickered over the primitive surroundings. Its promoters had described the show as a "dark, environmental production," but I was totally unprepared to be ensconced in the "underground." Not only did I get a taste of "life below the floorboards," I was pulled — hook, line and sinker — into an atmosphere evoking 19th-century Russia. It's true that the playing area verges on the claustrophobic, but less is more here.

I tucked into a seat at its edge, not far from the principal actor, who was already onstage. I was pleased to note how well Robert Honeywell suggested Dostoyevsky's Underground Man. He embodies the part of the 40-year-old former civil servant who has gone "underground" in his native St. Petersburg. With ragged clothes, a beard and palpable contempt etched into his mature features, Honeywell seemed born to this role.

The set and props are Spartan. The



Honeywell, I'm home: Robert Honeywell shines as the Underground Man in the Brick Theater's dimly lit production of "Notes from Underground," on stage now through March 22.

writing instruments are — inch by intelligent inch — the most vital props on stage. They dynamically emphasize the Underground Man's memoir, which is the central metaphor of the show. To be sure, variegated accents punctuate each scene, but his scribbled notes and personal outpourings are the backbone of the story.

The show opens with the Underground Man sitting in a cross-legged position on the stage. His fountain pen is poised in his hand, as if he's hesitant to commit his next thought to paper. His facial expression reveals a smoldering intensity, which in a moment erupts into

THEATER

Performance of "Notes from Underground," directed by Michael Gardner, are at 8 pm on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays through March 22 at the Brick Theater (575 Metropolitan Ave., Union Avenue in Williamsburg). Tickets with \$15. For information, call (917) 957-6189 or visit www.bricktheater.com.

a series of staccato-like statements. "I am a sick man. I am a wicked man. An unattractive man. I think my liver hurts," he says, glancing at us out of the corner of his eye, distrustful, full of paranoia. His opening words, in their vitriolic rawness, might well index the rest of the evening's proceedings. As his monologue continues, we discover that he's been in this despairing state of mind and malaise for years. And, in spite of the fact

that he's well-read and enjoyed peaks in his civil service career, he's acutely aware that he's deteriorated, has had "some debauches" and fallen into a rut.

How to reverse his despicable lot? He will take a pen in hand. Unpracticed, but with passion and excitement, he will "try to fix something in words." The Brick has subtitled its adapted version of Dostoyevsky's work, "a disgusting play," which brings out, initially, to the heart of the piece. After all, Dostoyevsky earned much of his cultural distinction by introducing the anti-hero to world literature. And although many still flinch at the author's disturbing language and imagery, his complex portrait of the Underground Man is a literary tour de force, and a prelude to his other great masterpieces.

Does the Brick's adaptation of "Notes from Underground" work as a dramatic piece? The show frankly jettisons almost everything we recognize as conventional theater, but surprisingly, the production succeeds with a kind of ragged aplomb. Gardner has written a top-notch version of Dostoyevsky's tale without becoming overly self-referential to its structural form.

No doubt the most innovative aspect to this stage adaptation is that it creates a kind of chorus for the Underground Man, comprised of the ensemble. Thus, instead of the nameless protagonist telling us his entire story, four actors (Moira Stone, Alyssa Simon, Mick O'Brien, Heath Kells) sit in the audience and interrupt his masochistic ramblings at key points. The upshot? The performance develops into a kind of conversational dogfight in which half a dozen arguments and opinions are voiced, and then torn to tatters.

Far and away, the scenes with the "bumped officer" and the "rescued prostitute" proved to be the most riveting moments. (And, I confess, the most darkly disturbing.) In these pivotal scenes, the production presents its sharpest intellectual edge, combining the talents of the ensemble with the coiled spring of Honeywell's Underground Man.

I do not feel that anyone could emerge from "Notes From Under-

CRITICIAN CALL FOR FAMILY

By **Adam Rathe**
for the Brooklyn Paper

There won't be a dry eye in the house on March 15, when the Brooklyn Family Theater (BFT), a Park Slope gem for the past seven years, has its last show at the Church of Gethsemane.

"I think the thing that was nearest about [BFT] was that it was a local theater that was truly based in the neighborhood," said board member Phil Greenland. "But by virtue of what city we're in, we were able to have a true local theater run by professionals. People wanted a family-oriented theater in their own neighborhood, and all of these people who worked with us did so for free simply because it was something they wanted."

The final show, which will feature BFT alumni performing, a film reel of the company's highlights and a giveaway of iconic costumes, will be a bittersweet goodbye for the group that has launched the careers of Broadway actors, producers and Hollywood filmmakers from a church in Park Slope. For information, call (917) 957-2731.

There's a new theater company in Downtown Brooklyn. On Friday, the Tysan Global company began its run of "Iphigenia," a new adaptation of the famed Greek tragedy "Iphigenia at Aulis," the last surviving work by Euripides. Director Helen Richardson, who adapted the play, has cast actors from around the world — some hailing from as far away as Israel, Turkey and Puerto Rico.

Not only does our diverse ensemble reflect the face of the new global community, it also reflects the face of Brooklyn itself. The show will run through March 16 at the Voorhees Theatre at the New York City College of Technology. For information, call (212) 663-6428 or visit www.entertainmentology.org.

Over at the Heights Players, "The Musical Comedy Murders of 1940," is being mounted through March 16. The John Bishop show, directed by Susan Montez (who you might remember as a player in their production of "Jake's Women"), is a fun, mysterious romp through a '40s mansion where no one is safe. For information about this Brooklyn

Heights show, call (718) 237-2752 or visit www.heightsplayers.org.

Through March 9, the Brooklyn College theater department is performing the black comedy "Lobby Hero" — written by Kenneth Lonergan of "Gangs of New York" fame — which follows a young security guard as he gets caught up in a murder investigation. Directed by MFA candidate Maury Kelley, this production is on stage at the college's New Workshop Theater in Midwood. For information, call (718) 951-4500 or visit www.brooklyn.cuny.edu.

Playwright Rosemary Hester's new work, "You Can't Leave That There," might be playing in Manhattan, but it's all about Bay Ridge. The one-act play by the Ridge native, who's also a teacher at Bay Ridge Prep, will run March 13-15 at the Players Loft in the Players Theater as part of the "Shortened Attention Span" festival. For information, call (212) 352-3101 or visit www.theatrecaniaman.com.

On Saturday, March 15, Tony award winner — and former "Chicago Hope" star — **Mandy Patinkin** is bringing his one-man theatrical concert to the Wall-Whitman Theatre in Midwood. Accompanied by pianist Paul Ford, the vintage heartthrob will belt his way through Broadway hits and tunes from his seven solo albums.

"It's a big stage, but Mandy can make the space and make it feel intimate," said Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts Artistic Director Seth Sokolow. For information, call (718) 951-4500 or visit www.brooklyncenteronline.com.

Also being feted in Manhattan is New Yorker scribe — and Prospect Heights resident — George Packer, whose "Ink" is a story based on his interviews with Osama bin Laden during his travels to Baghdad. It runs through March 16 at Culture Project. For information, call (212) 352-3101 or visit www.cultureproject.org.

If you've got a theater news tip, e-mail Waiting in the Wings at GOBrooklyn@BrooklynPaper.com.

9 DAYS...

Continued from page 2

Brooklyn-based Area musicians take part in a talk, 1 pm to 3 pm. Brooklyn Historical Society, 128 Pierrepont St. Reservations necessary. (718) 625-0260. Free.

GREENWOOD CEMETERY: Book "Wooden Cemetery: Book of the Dead's Gentleman." Crime historian and author Harold Schechter leads talk. Also, take a trolley tour and visit graves of Robert Moll, murderer at the Center of the Devil's. Gentlemen, \$5 donation, \$10 trolley tour, 1 pm, Fifth Avenue and 25th Street. Reservations necessary. (718) 788-7300.

PANEL TALK: Brooklyn Museum presents a panel discussion: "Feminism, Race, Gender and Generation." \$3, \$4 seniors, free for members and children 12 and younger. 2 pm to 4 pm, 200 Eastern Pkwy. (718) 638-5000.

OPENING: Birth Day Presence opens its studio, which offers birth and postpartum services, children's education classes and professional birth photography. Refreshers of pregnancy and postpartum related gifts, 3 pm to 6 pm, 291 Eighth St. (917) 607-1347. Free.

ART TALK: Clinton Hill Simply Art gallery hosts a "Meet the Artist Behind the Art" series and presents Karen Roth, 2 pm to 4 pm, 583 Myrtle Ave. (718) 852-0227. Free.

GALLERY TALK: "Artists & Books," a group exhibit, on view at 5 Plus 5 Gallery. Panel discussion with artists at 3 pm, 111 Front St., suite 210, (718) 498-6383. Free.

CURATORIAL TALK: Nature Art presents a talk with Ennio-

MON, MARCH 10

SENIOR EXERCISE PROGRAM: Seniors in Shore presents classes in tap dance, aerobics, pain management and more. \$5 day pass, 6:30 am to 3:30 pm. Aviator Sports and Recreation, Hanger 5, Floyd Bennett Field, (718) 788-7300.

CYPRIOT COOKING: The Center for Kofar Culinary Arts presents Ron Waverly, professional chef. Learn how to create a kosher Greek meal. \$70, 10:30 am to 1:30 pm, 1407 Coney Island Ave. (718) 692-2442.

ACTIVE ADULTS: Midwood senior group offers activities such as belly dancing, ballroom dancing, trips, lectures and more. Kofar meal served, 4:15 to 5:15 pm, (718) 253-5557.

MARINE PEARL SPEAKS: St. Francis College presents its Thomas Volpe Lecture Series with guest speaker Marlene Pearl. She speaks about making sense of her painful husband's death. 7 pm, 180 Remsen St. (718) 489-5200. Free.

TUES, MARCH 11

AUTHOR TALK: Brooklyn Public Library's Midwood branch presents a talk with Rebecca Hale, author of "Held at a Distance."



Strike it Rich: The music of the great, white way hits Brooklyn on March 8 and 9 when the Ridge Repertory Company presents "From Broadway to Bay Ridge," a review of show-stopping musical theater moments.

She recounts her journey home to Ethiopia, 2 pm, 975 E. 16th St. (718) 252-0991. Free.

SENIOR MEETING: AARP of Bay Ridge meets, 2:30 pm, Shore Hill Housing, 2000 Shore Rd. (718) 748-9114. Free.

BUSINESS WORKSHOP: Church Avenue Merchants Business Association offers the talk "Playing by the Rules: Stay in the Game." Learn about all city agencies and their various licenses and permit requirements. 6 pm to 8:30 pm, 884 Flatbush Ave. (718) 262-2500, ext. 242. Free.

RENTERS WORKSHOP: Brooklyn Public Library's Business branch hosts a talk on how to find tenants' information online. 6 pm, 280 Cadman Place West. (718) 623-7000. Free.

KITCHEN INGENUITY: The Center for Kofar Culinary Arts presents Naomi Rios, founder of Cooking Concepts. Take this class and learn how to make the most of staple party items and common leftovers. \$70, 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm, 1407 Coney Island Ave. (718) 692-2442.

READING: Author Gabriel Cohen reads from his book "Start: Can't Hurt the Sky: A Buddhist Path Through Disaster." 7 pm to 9 pm, 80 Hanson Pl. (718) 623-7000. Free.

WEDS, MARCH 12

SALSA FOR A CURE: American Cancer Society. Brooklyn chapters host a salsa dance party. \$5 donation, 7 pm to 9 pm, 259 Douglass St. (718) 498-5224.

SENIOR TALK: Older Adult Lecture Series presents a talk on social security and overall finan-

cial planning. Open to seniors. 10 am to 12 pm, Chafetz House, 421 Old Adult Services, 55 Pierrepont St. Call for time. (718) 853-0324. Free.

LAW COURSE: Brooklyn Bar Association. Free Dispute Resolution Program. Call to members. 6 pm to 8 pm, Remsen St. (718) 624-0475.

KNIFE SKILLS: The Center for Kofar Culinary Arts hosts a demo on how to properly use a knife. 7 pm to 9:30 pm, 1407 Coney Island Ave. (718) 692-2442.

READING: Nina Siegel, author of "The Truth About the Facts," reads at World Book Store. 7:30 pm, 126 Franklin St. (718) 383-0096. Free.

THURS, MARCH 13

LITERARY SERIES: Brooklyn Academy of Music hosts "Eat, Drink and Be Literary." Free. 7 pm to 9 pm, 126 Franklin St. (718) 383-0096. Free.

ARTIST TALK: Museum of Contemporary Art Diaspora presents David Reed Scott. He leads a tour of his exhibit and discusses his work. 7 pm to 9 pm, 80 Hanson Pl. (718) 623-7000. Free.

SALSA FOR A CURE: American Cancer Society. Brooklyn chapters host a salsa dance party. \$5 donation, 7 pm to 9 pm, 259 Douglass St. (718) 498-5224.

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For VIP admission at 7 pm, \$75. Open to seniors. 10 am to 12 pm, Chafetz House, 421 Old Adult Services, 55 Pierrepont St. Call for time. (718) 853-0324. Free.

ARTWALK: Atlantic Avenue Art Walk hosts a silent auction. \$75 includes catered dinner and drinks in a historic Boerum Hill home. 7:30 pm to 9:30 pm. Reservations necessary. Call for location. (718) 675-0993.

MUSIC: PIG Arts' Jazz at the Ink Well presents jazz group Warr. Uchida Quartet. \$5, 8 pm, 408 Rogers Ave. (718) 675-6145.

THE BRICK: "Notes from Underground." A Disputing Play. 8 pm. See Sat, March 15.

FRI, MARCH 14

TEACHER WORKSHOP: Brooklyn Arts Exchange offers teachers' workshop on how to integrate performing arts based skills, tools and activities into teaching. Performing arts based skills, tools and activities into teaching. 6 pm to 9 pm, 421 Fifth Ave. (718) 632-0018. Free.

SLEEP WITH THE FISHES: Brooklyn Aquarium Society presents speaker Joe Fendler in a talk: "The Romance of Aquarists." \$5 donation, free for members. 7:30 pm, NY Aquarium, Surf Avenue and West 87th Street. (718) 397-8225.

FILM SERIES: Spoke the Hub hosts the series "The Hub Matters," a collection of movies that dig deep into issues, stories, places, changes and people in the NY community. Today: "Every Mother's Son," a film about three women who lose sons to police brutality. \$5 donation, 7:30 pm, 259 Douglass St. (718) 498-5224.

STAGED OPERA: Brooklyn Repertory Opera presents "Cavalleria Rusticana," by Pietro Mascagni. \$20, \$10 students and seniors. 3:30 pm, Brooklyn Lyceum, 227 Fourth Ave. (917) 642-6925.

GREEK THEATER: "Iphigenia" by Euripides. \$12, \$10 seniors, \$5 students. 7:30 pm, Voorhees Theatre at the NYC College of Technology, 186 Jay St. (212) 632-0262.

THE BRICK: presents "Notes from Underground: A Disputing Play," based on the novel by Dostoyevsky. 8 pm, 575 Metropolitan Ave. (712) 352-3101.

BRICK: Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts presents Mandy Patinkin in concert. \$40, \$25, 8 pm. Wall-Whitman Theatre at Brooklyn College, 2900 Campus Dr. (718) 951-4500.

ARAB MUSIC: Brooklyn Maqam Arab Music Festival presents "Sawt al-Ma'ar" a voice of the Arab. 7:30 pm, 259 Douglass St. (718) 498-5224.

THEATER SERIES: The Brick Theater and Third Lines Productions hosts the honor series "Play the Devil." Episode 5. 8 pm, 575 Metropolitan Ave. (718) 907-6189.

OTHER

EDUCATION CONFERENCE: NYC public school teachers of all subject areas and grade levels, administrators and the general public are invited to the seventh annual Curriculum, Community, Collaboration and Celebration Conference. Keynote speaker is author Walter Dean Myers. 8:30 am to 5 pm, 18 The Pacific School, 450 Pacific St. (212)

966-5592.

RUMMAGE SALE: Warren's Guild of Flatbush Church Reform. 10 am to 4 pm, Flatbush. \$10.

CHURCH SERVICES: 1718 264-5400. BROOKLYN MUSEUM: presents contemporary artist Ghada Merawi. 10 am to 5 pm. \$4 students and seniors. 200 Eastern Pkwy. (718) 638-5000.

LIBRARY TALK: Brooklyn Public Library's Central branch presents author Paula Giddens in a talk about her book "Isa B. Miller: A Jewish Girl's Story." 4 pm, Grand Army Plaza. (718) 632-1000.

SQUARE DANCING: at St. Mark's Nativity Church. 7 pm, 3302 Ave. (718) 421-0000.

ST. PATRICK'S DINNER: hosted by St. Patrick's Church. 7 pm, 18th Avenue and 86th Street. 7:30 pm, (917) 605-6334.

SUN, MARCH 16

Palm Sunday OUTDOORS AND TOURS

IRISH HISTORY: Urban Park Rangers offers a walk to trace the history of the Irish in NYC. 1 pm, Fort Greene. (718) 625-0080.

PERFORMANCE

CONCERT: Brooklyn Public Library's Borough Park branch hosts a concert. 1:30 pm, 1245 43rd St. (718) 427-4045. Free.

BROOKLYN MUSEUM: presents Blues rock and roll music with Queens Esther. \$8, \$4 students and seniors. 3 pm to 5 pm, 200 Eastern Pkwy. (718) 638-5000.

ARAB MUSIC: Brooklyn Maqam Arab Music Festival presents "Sawt al-Ma'ar" a voice of the Arab. 7:30 pm, 259 Douglass St. (718) 498-5224.

CHAMBER MUSIC: Brooklyn Friends of Chamber Music presents "Johann Sebastian Bach: Passion According to St. Matthew." \$20, \$10 students. 4 pm, St. Ann and the Holy Trinity Church, 157 Montague St. (718) 855-3023.

GREEK THEATER: "Iphigenia." 3 pm. See Sat, March 15.

STAGED OPERA: "Cavalleria Rusticana." 3:30 pm. See Sat, March 15.

OTHER

BROOKLYN MUSEUM: presents the film "These Girls," from feminist media organization Women Make Movies. \$8, \$4 students and seniors. 2 pm to 3:30 pm, 200 Eastern Pkwy. (718) 638-5000.

LECTURE: Brooklyn Heights Synagogue hosts a talk by author, creator of the Off-Broadway play "Dear 6" and 131 Remsen St. (718) 522-0700. Free.

FLAME: Cafe Seinfeld presents "Barbed in the Park" (1967). 10:30 pm, 422 Seventh Ave. (718) 369-7776. Free.

RUMMAGE SALE: 12:30 pm. See Sat, March 15.

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Hot 'Dram'!

"Did you just walk in off the street?" a bartender at Dram Shop, a new Park Slope bar, asked me when I walked in the door. On that day, he explained, the bar wasn't officially open yet, but he invited me to stay as long as I wanted and drink free Brooklyn Lager.

This was my kind of place. In addition to 12 taps, a full bar and a menu of simple grub like burgers and hand-cut fries (courtesy of former Grocery sous chef and Martha Stewart Living editor Lesley Stockton), the new open-for-business Dram Shop has the feel of a mellow, inclusive hot house.

It's no surprise since owners Clay Mallow and Wade Hagenbath have both already cut their teeth with successful independent establishments—Angry Wade's bar on Smith Street and Sweet Melissa pastisseries in Cobble Hill and Park Slope.

"We were both born and raised in Brooklyn, and we want this to be a real neighborhood bar," said Mallow. "You don't have to get all dressed

up to come here. It's the place you can hang out and drink all day without getting hassled."

Despite the laid-back vibe, the name—a unit of measurement equal to one-eighth of an ounce, used in parts of the distillation process—is clearly an appeal to whiskey connoisseurs.

With activities like shuffleboard and pool, and a spacious outdoor area, there is plenty here to occupy you for hours at a time. Bathrooms are unisex, too, with full-length doors on individual stalls, so you could totally hook up if you wanted to.

We're not saying you should, but isn't it exciting to know it's a possibility?

Dram Shop Bar (339 Ninth St. between Fifth and Sixth avenues in Park Slope) accepts American Express, MasterCard and Visa. The bar is open Sunday through Thursday from 3 p.m. to 4 a.m., and Fridays and Saturdays, from noon to 4 a.m. For information, call (718) 788-1444.

—Chris Varmus

Monster success

Local composer wins commission for 'Golem'

By Marian Masone
for The Brooklyn Paper

Music and the movies have always made a great match. From cinema's earliest days, when music served as accompaniment to a film, until today, when film scores can make or break a "talkie," the two art forms belong together.

And don't think that today's cinematic music is merely background for current releases. Many musicians are writing music for new experimental films, as well as creating new scores for classics, like Windsor Terrace resident Tom Nazzola.

As one of the founding members of the BQE Project, a chamber ensemble dedicated to performing live accompaniment to contemporary and classic films, Nazzola knows this field well. And he'll have a chance to show off his musical and cinematic knowledge when the BQE Project gives, as a tribute to the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway, performs the world premiere of his BQE Project score for the 1920 landmark silent film, "The Golem," at the Walk Whitman Theatre in Midwood on Sunday.

The film, directed by German actor Paul Wegner, is a classic in both style and story. A wonderful example of German expressionism in cinema, it draws upon Hebrew legend to tell the tale of a rabbi in 16th century Prague who fashions an inanimate creature out of clay to protect his community from persecution.

Nazzola's score for "The Golem" was commissioned by Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts at Brooklyn College's "New York/New York" initiative.

"[This project] allowed us to work with a great Brooklyn artist and



He scores: Windsor Terrace composer Tom Nazzola premieres his new score for the silent classic "The Golem" on Sunday at the Walk Whitman Theatre in Midwood.

develop and grow our audience." CBCA Artistic Director Seth Solow told GO. "I knew this would be a great performance for our audience that was hungry for classical music, and it allows us to do something new and fresh."

Nazzola e-spoke with GO Brooklyn about how to come to identify with and be inspired by "The Golem."

"The idea behind the BQE Project is to create a film scoring music," explained Nazzola. "I want to bring any and all instances of audiovisual project

to our audiences with an emphasis on creating music that supports a moving image."

But before the composer even sits down to pen the score, there is the daunting task of choosing an inspiring project.

"I screen countless films until I



find something that really resonates with me," said Nazzola. "This can be a long process. My main emphasis is on finding a film that has a strong feeling and direction behind it. This usually involves a well-told story or the delivery of concrete emotions. I have to enjoy the film itself. If the film is strong, the musical ideas will come."

Nazzola said he was immediately drawn to "The Golem" and is underdog.

"I was impressed with the intensity of the images (especially of the Golem itself)," he said. "I also thought it would be a great platform for creating a different perspective for my compositional style through studying music of other cultures."

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Nazzola spent six months creating the score for "Golem."

"I felt some kind of deep connection with the storyline. Similar to the 1931 classic 'Frankenstein,' the film evokes empathy from the viewer for either the underdog, the oppressed, or the persecuted," he said. "I love films that reveal the plight of a person or group of people and allow us to enter that world and possibly gain a new perspective."

"There is also a strong mystical element involved in 'The Golem' which is something that I relate to on a musical and spiritual level."

Nazzola, who has written music for contemporary films as well as TV documentaries and animation, is a versatile composer with dreams of scoring for Hollywood.

"I've done a few independent films as well as composing new music for early talkies (classic films) such as Mary Shelley's 'Frankenstein' and Josef von Sternberg's 'The Blue Angel,'" said Nazzola. "These are two films that have dialogue on the soundtrack, but no film score, they were created in the early 1930s at a time when composing music for film was at its infancy."

"Since I ultimately desire to work on a current film out of Hollywood, scoring early talkies enables me to practice my hand at underscoring until I can segue into the West Coast scene."

All of which brings Nazzola and his seven-member ensemble to the world premiere of "The Golem" score for Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts on March 9.

Conducted by Nazzola, the musicians will play violin, cello, acoustic bass, piano, guitar (electric, nylon and mandolin) and ethnic percussion.

"I mentioned to [CBCA] that 'The Golem' was a film I was interested in doing... [They] actually offered to commission me to compose a new score for this film, which is exactly what one needs to get a major project like this off the ground. I thought about doing 'The Golem' for years and always hoped that there would be an occasion to create a new score for live performance."

CBCA regulars will remember the BQE Project from its 1998 performance there of its first score reconstruction—Charlie Chaplin's "City Lights."

Said Nazzola, "I guess we've come full circle."

Marian Masone is director of festivals and assistant program director for the Film Society of Lincoln Center.

BROOKLYN Nightlife

Compiled by Chiara V. Cowan

BAY RIDGE

The Wicked Monk
8115 Bay Ave. at Eden in Bay Ridge
(718) 921-6001, www.thewickedmonk.com
Sundays: Lunch 12:30-2:30 p.m., 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Mondays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Tuesdays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Wednesdays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Thursdays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Fridays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Saturdays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5.

BEDFORD-STUYVESANT

Rushbaby
1197 Fulton St. at Bedford Avenue in Bedford-Stuyvesant (718) 636-5536
Sundays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Mondays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Tuesdays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Wednesdays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Thursdays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Fridays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Saturdays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5.

FOOD 4 THOUGHT

445 Avenue of the Americas in Midtown
Sundays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Mondays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Tuesdays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Wednesdays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Thursdays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Fridays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Saturdays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5.

BOERUM HILL

Deity
368 Avenue C at Hopt Street in Boerum Hill (718) 222-3692, www.deitynyc.com
Sundays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Mondays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Tuesdays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Wednesdays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Thursdays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Fridays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Saturdays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5.

Hank's Saloon

46 Third Ave. at Atlantic Avenue in Boerum Hill (718) 625-6053, www.hanksaloon.com
Sundays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Mondays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Tuesdays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Wednesdays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Thursdays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Fridays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Saturdays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5.

BROOKLYN HEIGHTS

Last Exit Bar and Lounge
136 Atlantic Ave. at Clinton Street in Brooklyn Heights (718) 222-9796, www.lastexitbar.com
Sundays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Mondays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Tuesdays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Wednesdays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Thursdays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Fridays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Saturdays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5.

Magnetic Field

419 Atlantic Ave. at Henry Street in Brooklyn Heights (718) 334-0095, www.magneticfieldnyc.com
Sundays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Mondays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Tuesdays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Wednesdays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Thursdays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Fridays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Saturdays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5.

CLINTON HILL

Five Spot Restaurant
419 Atlantic Ave. at Washington Avenue in Clinton Hill (718) 822-0032, www.fivespotrestaurant.com
Sundays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Mondays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Tuesdays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Wednesdays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Thursdays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Fridays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5. Saturdays: 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. \$5.

DUMBO

Five Front
102 Court Street at Bedford Street in DUMBO (718) 625-5535, www.fivefrontrestaurant.com
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245 2nd St. at Fifth Avenue in Greenwich Heights (718) 783-1442, www.myspace.com/hungryforfoodnyc
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376 Ninth St. at Sixth Avenue in Park Slope (718) 965-9177, www.barbersnyc.com
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ISSUE PROJECT ROOM

232 Third St. at Third Avenue in Gowanus (718) 383-5723, www.issueprojectroom.com
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Cub Euroleopa
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147 Greenpoint Ave. at Manhattan Avenue in Greenpoint (718) 349-6999, www.clubexit.com
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BARBERS

3



Leigh-Taylor Smith (l) learns that she won the title of Miss Brooklyn as fellow contestant Carlon Alexandra (r) watches.

It's not easy being queen Miss Brooklyn speaks!

By Mike McLaughlin
The Brooklyn Paper

Uncle lies the head that wears a tiara.

Newly crowned Miss Brooklyn Leigh-Taylor Smith has been engulfed by controversy ever since she, a Manhattan resident, won the pageant over six rivals on Feb. 23.

"I can't believe all the 'controversy' of me taking the title back to Manhattan," Smith, 22, told The Brooklyn Paper this week. "I really didn't expect it."

That may have been a strike against Smith — real Brooklynites can always see a punch coming, after all — but the Virginia native battled back this week, an effort to settle the score with borough puritans.

In doing so, Smith made a solid — if inconsistent — argument for being a true queen of Kings.

To those who complained that Smith only won the title because Brooklyn women have better things to do than stroll a runway in a bikini, Smith said being a

beauty icon is only a hobby. "Look, I moved here to work, not to enter pageants," she said, referring to her success in the interior design world.

And she also lived up to her "Miss Brooklyn" title by snubbing the rich and powerful (she still hasn't accepted invitations from Mayor Bloomberg and Borough President Markowitz). And she's certainly opinionated — a renowned Brooklyn trait.

Indeed, she says Markowitz should run for mayor.

"He should run — and I'll support him," she said (unclear whether that makes her a good Brooklynite or a bad one).

And her strong opinions stopped short of taking a stand on the borough's singular development project, Atlantic Yards.

"You can't do this to me!" she laughed. "I've only been Miss Brooklyn for one week."

Then again, she's not alone in putting on Atlantic Yards — even New York Sen. Hillary Clinton hasn't stuck out a position on the project.

Update: CUNY gives Ratner failing grade

By Gersh Kuntzman
The Brooklyn Paper

The City University of New York scotched a plan to hire Bruce Ratner to build a new lab and residential skyscraper in Downtown Brooklyn because the Atlantic Yards developer would be too expensive, too slow and too controversial, The Brooklyn Paper has learned.

A newly surfaced memo shows that CUNY wanted out of its deal to pay Ratner \$307 million — up from \$86 million in 2005 — to build a new facility for City Tech on Jay Street because costs had begun to soar. "Cost estimates for the project have increased substantially — approximately \$50 million," CUNY Vice Chancellor Iris Weinsahl wrote to Chancellor Matthew Goldstein on Feb. 22.



Ratner might have been able to swallow the additional cost, given that the project also would have handed the developer control of a prime lot at Tillary and Jay streets — a corner where he once planned to build a Renzo Piano-designed skyscraper that days before the CUNY-Ratner divorce made news.

But, Weinsahl said, "the downturn in the local residential real-estate market" makes that dream an impossible one at the current time.

Not that she was complaining: "Proceeding with this project without [Ratner's] involvement would allow CUNY to build the project more efficiently and, therefore, less expensively," Weinsahl said.

A CUNY spokesman said the 11-story lab and classroom space would be built with the state Dormitory Authority. A spokesman for Ratner disputed that the developer would be to blame for delays.

Colbert nails our 'Graffiti girl'

By Gersh Kuntzman
The Brooklyn Paper

Stephen Colbert found a way to turn The Brooklyn Paper's famed "Graffiti girl" into a notorious villain.

Tuesday night's "Colbert Report" (right) featured a segment on Natalie Shea, the 10th Street 6-year-old who got a warning letter from the city this fall after drawing on her stoop with common sidewalk chalk.

Common? Not to Colbert: "Natalie is a calcium sulfate junkie," the anchorman said.

The segment recounted a story well known to readers of The Brooklyn Paper, namely how Natalie rattled her out to 311.

But it never let the girl off the hook. "Like all junkies, she's ruining the neighborhood," Colbert said.

The hilarious segment ended up blaming Natalie for the decline in property values, the sub-prime mortgage crisis and even Spike Lee's decision to throw a garbage can through the window of Sal's Pizza at the end of "Do the Right Thing."

People with sinusitis may experience a range of debilitating symptoms, such as nasal congestion, facial pains, headaches, fatigue, and loss of smell. New York Methodist Hospital recently introduced a cutting-edge surgical procedure that will improve the lives of countless sinusitis sufferers in Brooklyn and the surrounding area.

NYM's new procedure alleviates the pain of sinusitis by clearing blockages in the sinus openings, allowing the sinuses to drain the bacteria that can cause infections.

This new procedure — called balloon sinusplasty — uses a guide wire and catheter to guide a tiny flexible balloon through the



sinus cavities to the site of the obstruction. The balloon is gently inflated, which widens the opening of the sinus and clears the blockage. The balloon is then deflated and removed, and normal function

ing of the sinuses is restored. Advanced imaging and X-ray techniques are used during the surgery to help position the surgical instruments, increasing the precision of the operation.

"Balloon sinusplasty greatly improves the surgical outcomes for each patient," said Mohsen Habib, MD, FACS, chief of the division of otolaryngology at New York Methodist Hospital, who performs the procedure.

"Since the procedure is minimally invasive and highly precise, the risk of scarring or bleeding is minimized, so patients can look forward to a short, uncomplicated recovery."

"New York Methodist Hospital is proud to be one of the few institutions in Brooklyn to offer this advanced surgical procedure," added Anthony Tortolani, MD, chairman of surgery at NYM. "Balloon sinusplasty enables the hospital to improve the lives of many patients who suffer from sinusitis while dramatically enhancing the surgery process."

People with sinusitis are considered to be candidates for balloon sinusplasty if they've failed to respond to medical treatments such as nasal sprays, antibiotics, or anti-inflammatories. Since various factors determine if balloon sinusplasty is the right treatment for a patient with sinusitis, it's important to consult with an otolaryngologist who has experience in this procedure.

For a referral to an otolaryngologist at New York Methodist Hospital, please call 718-499-CARE.

quality care, regardless of their family's income," said Velazquez.

Rajen Persaud, who was born premature, shared his personal story at the ribbon cutting ceremony.

Rajen spent two months in Lutheran's NICU where he was provided with around the clock intensive care. Fifteen years later Rajen returned as a volunteer. He spent this past summer volunteering in Lutheran Medical Center's NICU, working alongside two of the nurses who guided him back to health as an infant.

The renovation and upgrade project will double the size of the neonatal intensive care unit and includes a modified nursery, a new antenatal, and waiting area spaces. Additional renovations will include reconstructing the nursery NICU nurse stations.

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WATER...

Continued from page 1

"Obviously, what we're saying is that you can live longer and better if you can afford it."

"The people who are using the bottled water would be better off giving their money to purify the water supply for everyone."

Neither Fiji nor Poland Spring responded to requests for comment. But both are well aware of the green trend.

Just recently, the Maine-based bottled-water giant began touting its "eco-shape bottle," which it claims is made with 30 percent less plastic than the typical half-liter bottle. Meanwhile, a company that bottles water on the distant Pacific island has committed to acquiring 50 percent of its energy from renewable resources by 2010.

VOX POP Water down

The Park Slope Food Co-op is about to vote on whether to stop selling bottled water, which is a big step, even for a famously environmentally minded supermarket. Here's what some Co-op members had to say.

Interviews and photos by Emily Levin

"I'm in favor of stopping the selling of bottled water. Just think about how much plastic is used, the energy that it takes to make it, break it down and transport it."

Julianne Zaleta, Park Slope

"I'm not excited about the ban, but we do have to attend to the effects plastic has on the environment. But we have these individual solutions, like banning bottles, don't quite do enough."

Hugh English, Park Slope

"Sometimes I feel like other issues — like the effect of large corporations on the environment — are more important to battle, rather than people expecting to solve huge problems with their individual consumer choices."

Joelle Saldaña, Prospect Heights

"I think [the ban] is great. New York water is great. We don't need to spend money on something the city gives us for free. We're learning as time goes by that there are luxuries we have that we don't need."

Peter Bergold, Park Slope

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Sinus treatment at NYM

New York Methodist Hospital

According to the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, 37 million Americans are diagnosed with sinusitis, a chronic infection or inflammation of the sinuses, every year.

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sinus cavities to the site of the obstruction. The balloon is gently inflated, which widens the opening of the sinus and clears the blockage. The balloon is then deflated and removed, and normal function

ing of the sinuses is restored. Advanced imaging and X-ray techniques are used during the surgery to help position the surgical instruments, increasing the precision of the operation.

"Balloon sinusplasty greatly improves the surgical outcomes for each patient," said Mohsen Habib, MD, FACS, chief of the division of otolaryngology at New York Methodist Hospital, who performs the procedure.

"Since the procedure is minimally invasive and highly precise, the risk of scarring or bleeding is minimized, so patients can look forward to a short, uncomplicated recovery."

"New York Methodist Hospital is proud to be one of the few institutions in Brooklyn to offer this advanced surgical procedure," added Anthony Tortolani, MD, chairman of surgery at NYM. "Balloon sinusplasty enables the hospital to improve the lives of many patients who suffer from sinusitis while dramatically enhancing the surgery process."

People with sinusitis are considered to be candidates for balloon sinusplasty if they've failed to respond to medical treatments such as nasal sprays, antibiotics, or anti-inflammatories. Since various factors determine if balloon sinusplasty is the right treatment for a patient with sinusitis, it's important to consult with an otolaryngologist who has experience in this procedure.

For a referral to an otolaryngologist at New York Methodist Hospital, please call 718-499-CARE.

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Rajen Persaud, who was born premature, shared his personal story at the ribbon cutting ceremony.

Rajen spent two months in Lutheran's NICU where he was provided with around the clock intensive care. Fifteen years later Rajen returned as a volunteer. He spent this past summer volunteering in Lutheran Medical Center's NICU, working alongside two of the nurses who guided him back to health as an infant.

The renovation and upgrade project will double the size of the neonatal intensive care unit and includes a modified nursery, a new antenatal, and waiting area spaces. Additional renovations will include reconstructing the nursery NICU nurse stations.

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The Brooklyn Paper

KIDS • SCHOOL • STYLE • TEENS • CAMPS • MUSIC

PARENT

Growi-ups need their toys, too!

FAMILY CALENDAR

Compiled by Susan Rosenthal Jay



A scene from "Desmond and the Swamp Barbarian Trap," at BAMs short film festival this weekend.

SATURDAY, MARCH 8

10:30 am-3 pm Short film fest. Brooklyn Academy of Music (30 Lafayette Ave., at Ashland Place in Fort Greene) \$7.50, \$11 adults. Call (718) 636-4100 for info.

Neon and 2:30 pm: Care Bears on Fire. Brooklyn Academy of Music (30 Lafayette Ave., at Ashland Place in Fort Greene). \$7. Call (718) 636-4100 for info.

Neon-2 pm: Open House. Brooklyn Arts Exchange (421 Fifth Ave., at Eighth Street in Park Slope). Free. Call (718) 832-0018 for info.

12:30 pm and 2:30 pm: "Cinderella." Puppetsworks (338 South Ave., at Fourth Street in Park Slope). \$5, \$7 kids. Call (718) 965-3371 for info.

SUNDAY, MARCH 9

11 am-3 pm: Short film fest. See Saturday, March 8.

Neon: Tiny Masters of Time. Brooklyn Academy of Music (30 Lafayette Ave., at Ashland Place in Fort Greene). \$7. Call (718) 636-4100 for info.

1 pm: Scrapbooking workshop. Fort Greene Park Visitors Center (Enter park at Myrtle Avenue and Washington park). Free. Call (718) 722-3218 for info.

2 pm: Plant workshop. Brooklyn Botanic Garden (1000 Washington Ave., at

MONTGOMERY STREET IN PROSPER

Heights) \$8 adults, \$4 seniors and students. Call (718) 623-7200 for info.

12:30 pm and 2:30 pm: "Cinderella." See Saturday, March 8.

2 pm: Eggstravaganza. The Norwegian Christian Home (1230 67th St., between 12th and 13th avenues in Dyer Heights). Call Victoria Pedraza at (718) 748-5950 for info.

MONDAY, MARCH 10

4 pm: Hip-hop dance workshop. Brooklyn Public Library's Central branch (Flatbush Avenue at Eastern Parkway on Grand Army Plaza). Free. Call (718) 230-2100 for info.

SATURDAY, MARCH 15

10 am and 4 pm: Kids acting workshop. Brooklyn Arts Exchange (421 Fifth Ave., at Eighth Street in Park Slope). Free. Call (718) 832-0018 for info.

12:30 pm and 2:30 pm: "Cinderella." See Saturday, March 8.

SUNDAY, MARCH 16

2 pm: Kids theater: "Sleeping Beauty." Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts at Brooklyn College (2900 Campus Rd., at Hill Place in Midwood). \$12. Call (718) 951-4500 for info.

12:30 pm and 2:30 pm: "Cinderella." See Saturday, March 8.

To list your event, e-mail information to Calendar@BrooklynPaper.com.

Can we please just end the Babeland controversy before it even begins? For the record: Smartmom can't wait for the May opening of Babeland, the woman-friendly sex toys shop on Bergen Street off Fifth Avenue. And so are plenty of Park Slopers.

Of course, that didn't prevent the New York Post from coining out of the Murdochian slime to dis the neighborhood with its story this week on the coming sex shop. "Sex Toy Shop Has Bad Vibes in Park Slope," the paper of right-wing record stated — and, naturally, found a few prudes that it could use as proxies for a sexless, repressed neighborhood.

"I don't think it's the ideal location for a provocative business," Bruce Osborne told the Post, which was no doubt looking for yet another "Park Slopers are idiots" story (versions of which seem to be keeping every writer in town well occupied lately).

A 32-year-old stay-at-home mom added, "I don't think it's a great idea."

You know where this is headed.

We all remember what happened in 2002, when the Pink Pussycat Boutique — the dildo and vibrator emporium — opened across from MS 51 on Fifth Avenue — between Fourth and Fifth streets.

Plenty of middle-school parents were agitated at having a sex shop across the street from their children's middle school. Councilman Bill DeBlasio (D-Park Slope) came to a PTA meeting

SMART mom

By Louise Crawford



fully prepared to advocate for the parents against the store. But that didn't turn out to be necessary. In the end, the PTA voted to ask the shop to lock its door during school hours and to refrain from overly sexual window displays.

So the store is still stands and everybody seems happy. There are way more important things to worry about than a shop that sells lubricants and edible underwear — like the math program for instance, or the behavior of the kids at lunchtime.

A few weeks after the PTA meeting, Teen Spirit's filmmaking class thought about making a video documentary about the whole controversy. Smartmom felt vindicated. Even a divisive topic could be a valuable learn-



ing experience for a bunch of Park Slope kids.

So why not welcome Babeland? For one thing it sounds like they'll have an incredible selection of dildos in many sizes, shapes and colors. And while this neighborhood is rife with good restaurants, children's clothing stores and real-estate offices, there's a dearth of sex toys shops.

Yes, a dearth. Just because Park Slope is a child-obsessed neighborhood doesn't mean that the grownups can't have sex. I mean, kids are evidence that parents do have sex once in a while. At least they once did.

ENOUGH time doing it. In fact, it's probably the one activity that they're not highly motivated about.

If parents in Park Slope spend a little less time hovering over their children, worrying about middle school admissions, SAT scores and extracurricular activities, and more time engaging in sensual activities, maybe everyone would be a little bit happier.

Which isn't to say that Smart-

mom and Hepcat aren't happy. It's just that their family-centered lifestyle and two-small apartment doesn't leave enough time for canoodling. And Smartmom is sick and tired of hearing about the sex lives of her divorced friends who have recently met the loves of their lives and seem to be spending inordinate amounts of time in bed.

It's not like Smartmom is jealous or anything. She knows that Hepcat is the best catch in the sea. But finding the time to get intimate is harder than getting a spot at one of the neighborhood's prestigious private schools.

So, Smartmom can't imagine a better store. Specializing in sex toys for mature adults, the bestselling items on the Babeland Web site include the Form 6, an upscale rechargeable vibrator for \$175, the Hitachi, described as the Cadillac of vibrators, for \$84 and the \$165 Delight, a snake-like device that "practically guides itself to your favorite pleasure points."

What a perfect destination for "date night" — how about dinner, a movie and a prolonged stop at Babeland to pick up something to spice things up in the bedroom?

Now don't be embarrassed; it's not like you're a middle-schooler. You're a consenting adult and you can shop at Babeland without all the fuss.

And want you should.

The only question, as one poster on Brownstone asked, "Will Babeland allow strollers?" Louise Crawford also writes, "Only the Blog Knows Brooklyn," a Web site.

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BROOKLYN BUILDS

What's wrong with this picture?



Several members of the Landmarks Preservation Commission have objected to the modern, five-story glass addition atop the landmark Domino Sugar plant.

Sugar plant extension raising city's ire

By Mike McLaughlin
The Brooklyn Paper

The city is apparently not sweet on a developer's plans to build a five-story glass addition atop the landmark Domino Sugar refinery building along the Williamsburg waterfront.

Several members of the Landmarks Preservation Commission on Monday criticized the glass structure as being too big and incompatible with the 12-story factory's industrial past. The 12-story-old brick factory is the centerpiece of CPC Resources' plans for a multi-tier, 2,200-unit apartment complex at the Williamsburg plant on the East River.

Our responsibility is to protect the landmark building, and we need to use the strategies we normally apply, which is to keep this addition as 'low possible,' said

Stephen Byrns, an architect on the 11-member commission.

Other commissioners echoed that thought, which is surprising, given that the agency recently approved a 140-room hotel atop the Battery Maritime Building in Manhattan, and, in a controversial decision in 2001, gave the green light to Sir Norman Foster's Hearst Tower addition, which added a 46-story modern glass skyscraper to the original six-story cast stone base.

Tuesday's comments on Domino are not an official ruling on the project, of course.

But to gain approval for the glass penthouse, CPC President Michael Lippin will need to incorporate the disparate opinions of the commissioners.

He took the critique in stride. "It's been a building that's been bungled around a bit and they want

Revolt against this 'Toll'

By Mike McLaughlin
The Brooklyn Paper

The suburban luxury home-builder angling to construct the first major residential project along the Gowanus Canal felt the fury of pent-up anti-development anger this week.

Activists said the neighborhood can't absorb the Toll Brothers' plan to build a 100-unit luxury apartment complex along the canal, which would replace the industrial buildings that once lined the waterway.

"It's too dense and overshadowed the neighborhood," said Marilyn Oliva, one of about 40 people at St. Mary's Star of the Sea meeting room on First Street on Monday night.

In addition to complaints of the physical presence of two 12-story buildings along the canal bank, Toll Brothers' project also



The Toll Brothers' plan for the Gowanus Canal.

city officials and other area activists believe that only residential housing development will create a new population of people who are heavily invested in cleaning up the waterway and having it bloom with explosives, cafes and parkland.

"Ten years ago, I would have gone down on bended knee to get developers into that area," said Buddy Scotto, a board member of the Gowanus Canal Community Development Corporation, which pushes for affordable housing and environmental remediation in the area.

There's no need to beg now — the Bloomberg administration says it will rezone the manufacturing area and pick a developer for a large parcel to the south of the Toll Brothers site before the mayor leaves office in 2009.

David Von Speckelsen, a Toll Brothers vice president, called that progress — but he

quickly learned that he had stepped into a lion's den.

"You present it as either we get your development or the canal stays the way it is — that's a fallacy," said one man.

Community's support may be hard to come by, but Toll Brothers has the backing of Councilman Bill DeBlasio (D-Carroll Gardens).

"A project with 130 units of affordable housing is a win for the community," DeBlasio told The Brooklyn Paper.

DeBlasio wasn't at the meeting — his office says he was not invited — but mayoral candidate and current Councilmember Tony Avella (D-Queens) was there, securing a guaranteed bloc of a dozen votes by playing to the anti-development crowd.

"The real-estate industry controls the agenda in this city," said Avella.

The Department of City Planning will hold a scoping meeting on the Toll Brothers project on March 13 at 22 Riverside St. in Manhattan. Call (212) 720-3300 for info.

Inside Ikea's blue and yellow fortress



The new Ikea store in Red Hook, which is expected to open in August, has a view of the surrounding neighborhood — and the Manhattan skyline.

By Mike McLaughlin
The Brooklyn Paper

The Mongstad mirrors will be on the second floor, near the windows with those killer views of Manhattan. The kid's play room will be near the front door. And over there, near the 1,400-car parking lot, is where you'll eat those Swedish meatballs.

Yes, Ikea is getting closer to opening its Red Hook store.

The Brooklyn Paper took an advance look last week, about five months before the Swedish furniture giant hopes to sell its first Morke lamps, Udden kitchen systems and Bastis cat-scratching posts.

The far-from-completed store could use, well, some home furnishing of its own.

But it's coming along.

Already, the company has imported veteran manager Mike Baker, who has successfully opened stores in Toronto and Shanghai, to run the Brooklyn site, which, in addition to the massive parking lot, will have a public plaza and free weekend water taxi service.



The new Ikea store in Red Hook, which is expected to open in August, has a view of the surrounding neighborhood — and the Manhattan skyline.

Miles of empty shelves are waiting to be stocked at the new Ikea in Red Hook.

Baker and his team are busy finding 500 minions to stock the shelves, work the checkout registers and do everything else to keep the store humming. Red Hook residents have had a head start in the application process, but it's not yet known how many will be hired.

Of course, there's one way to get a leg up. Baker joked, "You don't get a job if you don't eat here."

"Business is going down and down," said Marzena Parys, who co-owns Polskie Meat Market with Gal. "We hope it will come around, because I don't think there will be a future for our business in this neighborhood."

Gibran's latest go-round — in Ft. Greene

By Dana Rubinstein
The Brooklyn Paper

One year after the city tried to kick its first Arabic language academy into a Park Slope elementary school — sparking weeks of protests by PTA parents — the city is trying to do almost precisely the same thing, this time in Fort Greene.

The Department of Education wants to permanently place the Khalil Gibran International Academy, which plans to house grades 6-12, in PS 287, an elementary school on Navy Street, between Flushing Avenue and the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway.

Parents of students at the school are voicing concerns quite similar to those expressed by parents at Park Slope's PS 282 last March, namely, that high school and elementary schools children

POLISH...

Continued from page 1

only relative; indeed, longstanding Polish residents can no longer afford them.

"Young people are coming from all over and the rent just keeps going up," said Christine Sankner, who has lived in Greenpoint for the past 52 years.

Despite the soaring rents, the glass condos and the Polish exodus, Sankner is confident that Greenpoint will remain a Polish neighborhood.

"They're not going to take over all of the stores," she said. "Greenpoint will always be Polish."

That's not so clear. If there's one truism about life in New York it's that neighborhoods change. It can take two generations, but neighborhoods change.

It's already starting in some stores, where shop owners are stocking more American goods.

"You have to move with the crowd, so now we also carry American things," said Joanna, an employee at Horowitz's, a grocery store on Nassau Avenue.

"And other storeowners can see the end is near."

"Business is going down and down," said Marzena Parys, who co-owns Polskie Meat Market with Gal. "We hope it will come around, because I don't think there will be a future for our business in this neighborhood."



Opening day at the Gibran school.

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CONTINUED FROM BACK PAGE

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Public Notice

THE PORT AUTHORITY OF NY & NJ REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR-HIRE CAR SERVICE

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey is seeking Requests for Proposals (RFP) from qualified firms to provide For-Hire Car Service for cruise ship passengers traveling from the Brooklyn Cruise Terminal to locations in the metropolitan area.

A pre-proposal meeting is scheduled for March 6, 2008, at 12:30 pm at Pier 12, New York Marine Terminal, Columbia Street, Brooklyn, New York. Interested parties shall arrive at the meeting at 11:30 am. Proposals must be received by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, Purchasing Services Division, Procurement Department, One Madison Ave., 7th Floor, New York, NY 10010.

This document can be obtained online through this ad on www.panynj.gov.

Proposals shall be due by 2:00 PM on March 17, 2008, or as otherwise indicated in the solicitation package sent to you. Send proposals to: The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, Purchasing Services Division, Procurement Department, One Madison Ave., 7th Floor, New York, NY 10010.

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REAL ESTATE

Commercial Property

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE EXISTING BUILDING BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11222-9998

The USPS is seeking proposals to lease existing space of approximately 6,500SF net interior first floor space. Parking must be provided for 30-35 employee vehicles, 20 Postal Carrier vehicles and a loading dock of 412SF is required for the Center Annex in the Greenpoint Section of Brooklyn, NY 11222-9998. The preferred geographic location is bounded by: North: Newtown Creek, South: North 15th Street/Bayard-Cooper St., East: Newtown Creek, West: West Street.

Offers of existing space may be submitted in letter form and must specify the fixed rental amount for a basic lease term of ten (10) years, with four successive five (5) year renewal option terms. Site descriptive data, zoning information, Agent authorization, if any, and ownership information is required. The USPS does not lease or purchase property located within a Floodplain or designated Wetlands area. Submittals in significant violation of the above requirements, while not preferred, will be considered. The Postal Service shall not be responsible for contingent fees.

Expressions of interest should be received at the following address no later than March 28, 2008: The Crown Partnership, LLC, Jane Rose Clarke, R.E. Contractor for U.S. Postal Service, 290 M Street NW - 2nd Fl., Suite 200 Washington, DC 20007 with a copy to clarke@crownpartnership.com (202) 533-9406 (FAX) (718) 637-5251

LEGAL NOTICES

Notice of formation of Making Change, LLC. Art. of Org. filed with Secy of State of NY (SSNY) on Oct. 18, 2007. Office location: Kings County, SSNY designated as agent of the LLC upon whom process against it shall be served. SSNY shall mail a copy of any process to: Making Change, LLC, 109 St. Marks Pl., Brooklyn, NY 11217. Purpose: Any lawful purpose.

State of North Carolina, County of Cumberland
In the General Court of Justice District Court Division, File No: 07J2123
In Re: Nandi Adu Baptiste, A minor child; Kings District Dugan, Petitioner, vs. Chakka Adu Baptiste, Respondent. Notice of Service by Publication.
Take Notice that a pleading seeking relief against you has been filed in the above captioned action. The nature of the relief being sought is as follows: Termination of Parental Rights upon the grounds that for a continuous period of more than six months Respondent has failed to have any contact with the minor child.
You are required to make defense to such pleading no later than the 10th day of April, 2008, and upon your failure to do so, the party seeking service against you will apply to the Court for relief sought.
This 29th day of February, 2008.
Sherry Miller, Attorney for the Plaintiff. Miller, King & Clouse, 108 Hay Street, Fayetteville, NC 28302

Notice is hereby given that a license, license Number 1258780 has been applied for by ANJAY RESTAURANT CORP to sell at retail in a restaurant. For or premises consumption under the Alcoholic Beverage Control law at 240 Kings Highway, Brooklyn, NY 11224.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts, The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Department, Worcester, District No. 070274261, Divorce/Separate Support Summons by publication, Alexander George Lake, Plaintiff v. Erica Pamela Lake, Defendant. To the above named Defendant: A complaint has been presented to this court by the plaintiff, Alexander George Lake, seeking a divorce. An automatic Restraining Order Rule 411 for more information. You are required to respond upon Alexander George Lake plaintiff whose address is 2 Phipps Street Westchester, MA 01887 your answer on or before April 22, 2008. If you fail to do so, the court will proceed to the hearing and adjudication of this case. You are also required to file a copy of your answer in the office of the Registrar of this Court at Worcester, MA 01608. Joseph L. Hart, Jr., Esquire, First Justice of said Court at Worcester, the Tenth day of February, 2008.

Notice is hereby given that a license, license No. 1258780 has been applied for by Phipps Inc. to sell at wholesale at retail in a restaurant. For or premises consumption under the Alcoholic Beverage Control law at 1492 Bk Street, Brooklyn, NY 11219

LEGAL NOTICES

Notice of formation of LKPECTCO LLC. Arts. of Org. filed w/SSNY 11/08/07. Location Kings County. Purpose: any lawful activity. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it shall be served. SSNY shall mail a copy of any process to: 408 St. Johns Place, 2C, Brooklyn, NY 11238.

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LEGAL NOTICES

Notice is hereby given that an Order entered by the Civil Court, Kings County on the 5th day of March, 2008, bearing Index Number N007192008, a copy of which may be examined at the Office of the Clerk, located at CIVIL COURT, KINGS COUNTY, 141 Livingston Street, Brooklyn, New York 11201, in room 007, grants me the right to assume the name of Julia Mazur Tibbe. My present name is Julia Elizabeth Tibbe, aka Julia Elizabeth Mazur. My present address is 216 A 222nd Street, Brooklyn, NY 11222. My place of birth is Stanford, California. My date of birth is September 11, 1968.

Notice is hereby given that an Order entered by the Civil Court, Kings County on the 4th day of March, 2008, bearing Index Number N007192008, a copy of which may be examined at the Office of the Clerk, located at CIVIL COURT, KINGS COUNTY, 141 Livingston Street, Brooklyn, New York 11201, in room 007, grants me the right to assume the name of Nahi Maher Al-Azani. My present name is Nahi Maher Al-Azani, aka Nahi Maher Al-Azani. My present address is 14801 Newtown Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11226. My place of birth is Brooklyn, NY. My date of birth is February 1, 2008.

LEGAL NOTICES

Notice of Formation of Erma Realty, LLC; Arts., of Org., filed with NY Sec. of State ("SSNY") 05/20/2002. Office in Kings County; SSNY designated agent for service of process with copy mailed to E. Robert Goodkind, Esq., c/o Pryor Cashman LLP, 410 Park Avenue, 10th Fl., New York, NY 10022. All lawful business purposes.

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